

The Willows Daycare Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY337463 |
| Inspection date | 25 July 2007 |
| Inspector | Deirdra Keating |
| Setting Address | The Willows Children's Centre, Magdalene Close, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 9UX |
| Telephone number | 01473556733 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | The Willows Day Care Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Willows Day Care Ltd opened in 2007. It operates from a purpose-built building linked by the school nursery to Willows Primary School. The setting is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 18 children aged from two to five years on roll. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs a qualified manager and five members of staff who all have appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is extremely well promoted through thorough and consistent procedures that are documented and shared with parents. Comprehensive policies and procedures ensure that

children are very well protected from cross-infection. Extremely positive steps are taken to promote the children's good health and encourage them to manage their own needs. An easily accessible bathroom with low-level sinks encourages children to wash their hands and use the toilet. Colourful prompts and photographs remind children to wash their hands. Very young children confidently stand on a step and play in the water while staff carefully ensure that their hands are clean for lunch. Children receive excellent care if they become ill or have an accident as clear procedures are all in place. A well stocked first aid box is readily available and a good ratio of staff have up to date first aid training. Accidents and medication records are meticulously recorded and signed off by parents at collection.

Children benefit from an extremely healthy diet. They enjoy varied, well presented food and snacks which comply with all special dietary requirements. Food is all prepared using fresh produce and the kitchen is risk assessed daily to maintain a high standard of hygiene and cleanliness. Children receive a nutritious and balanced diet featuring fresh vegetables, fruit and good quality ingredients. This is freshly cooked on the premises by staff who have food hygiene training. A vegetable patch encourages children to understand about freshly grown food. The children enjoy a social lunch time where staff sit with children to offer support and encourage children's good table manners and conversation. Babies are fed by key-worker staff who encourage them to be increasingly independent as they learn to feed themselves. Detailed weaning lists compiled by parents and staff ensure that babies diets are suitable and compatible with their stage of development. Children remain extremely well-hydrated throughout the session. Fresh drinking water is readily available and located in all areas. Older children confidently pour drinks and babies have separate coloured beakers which staff guide them to in order that they can drink freely.

Children rest and sleep according to their needs on individual sleep mats and in cots. A well thought-out routine allows children to sleep in the soft and comfortable quiet area. Staff support children calmly and comfortingly as they settle them off to sleep. They cradle them in their arms before putting them down and consequently children are contented and relaxed as they settle down to sleep. A rigorous monitoring system ensures that children are regularly checked in order to see that they are safe and comfortable. Children have many opportunities to participate in active play which encourages their physical development. All children enjoy free-flow access to an extremely well resourced outdoor area that provides a superb range of physical experiences and activities. This promotes children's physical development extremely well and enables them to get plenty of exercise outside in the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a purpose-built light and spacious environment that is extremely well maintained. An 'aroma stream' fans lavender oil around the room providing a calming and relaxing atmosphere. The organisation of space has been extremely well thought out to give defined areas. A low-level window enables children to see into the next door nursery which links to the school. Toilet facilities are accessible and child-friendly. The room has been very attractively decorated to give a child-friendly and colourful atmosphere. Children use an excellent range of high quality safe and suitable equipment. A broad range of resources are stored at a low level which promotes children's independence. Transparent toy boxes are labelled with pictures and text, these provide a balanced range of activities that are interactive and promote children's learning in all areas. Toys for younger children are stimulating and well planned to provide a superb range of sensory experiences. Treasure baskets have been creatively developed

to provide a range of natural household objects and materials. This inspires babies and younger children to express their feelings using all of their senses.

Children are cared for in an extremely safe environment where staff are very proactive to ensure that any risks to children are minimised. Detailed and clear operational procedures for outings and emergencies are well planned and documented. All venues are risk assessed prior to outings and evaluated afterwards. Regular fire drills ensure that staff and children know what to do in the event of a fire. Fire prevention equipment is regularly checked and all recommendations are met. The premises are extremely secure and monitored by an electronic fob system. Robust systems are in place to ensure the safe arrival and collection of children such as passwords and photographs of persons who are authorised to collect. Children are extremely well protected from potential harm because staff are vigilant and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the protection of children. Comprehensive documentation is all readily available which ensures that correct procedures can be put into place should a safeguarding concern arise. Knowledgeable and experienced staff have specific training in this area, this ensures that children's welfare is paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish their time at the setting and have an excellent attitude to learning. They are happy, settled and purposefully engaged throughout the session. Staff confidently use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities and support their excellent practice. Concise plans are based on children's interests and supports child-initiated play incorporating the next steps in the child's learning. The planning clearly details an environment sheet to show how activities can be differentiated for different age groups. Staff regularly observe children and share their development with parents to ensure that a consistent approach is taken. There is an extensive range of activities that provide children with stimulating play experiences to promote their care, learning and play. These have been creatively extended to the outside area which has an excellent range of tactile and sensory experiences. Babies are relaxed and contented as they play on the sensory camomile lawn. A range of colourful tactile objects are hung at a low level on the far side to encourage babies to crawl across the soft and scented grass. There is a considerable range of reflective and sensory resources which inspire babies to experiment and explore.

Children develop confidence and a strong sense of self through positive interaction with adults. They have formed close and trusting relationships with staff who are extremely warm and tactile. All areas of children's development are significantly enhanced by the superb quality of the staff's interactions and all children greatly benefit from the close personal attention they receive. Innovative and creative ideas are evident in all areas of the room. Colourful day care stories have been collated for each child. These provide a photographic story showing how the children progress and are available for the children to look at and enjoy. Many interactive resources are stored in transparent storage boxes encouraging children's decision making. There are many opportunities for children to explore through messy play experiences. Sparkly sand, cornflour, water and play dough enable all children to enjoy hands-on exciting activities that capture their interest and imagination. Children focus intently as they play with wet sand and bricks outside. They happily recreate roles that they find exciting as they smear wet sand using a trowel onto coloured bricks.

Staff support children's imaginary play extremely well as they recreate a beach in a large sandpit. They provide resources and interactions as requested by children, sensitively enhancing their

imaginative play and following it up with extension activities that are suggested by the child. This child-initiated approach ensures that activities are of particular interest to children and consequently children are thoroughly absorbed throughout the session. Children happily bath dolls outside using real baby shampoo and link this with experiences from home. They are extremely comfortable in the setting because parents regularly share information about children's needs, interests and experiences outside the home. This is used by staff to plan experiences that capture their interests and imagination and consequently children relish their time at the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop an excellent sense of belonging and are warmly welcomed by staff who are genuinely pleased to see them. They are all treated with equal concern and highly valued by staff. Photographs of all the children are readily displayed in the room and in small albums for children to look through. This gives children a personal sense of belonging and encourages them to talk about their families and home lives which helps them feel accepted and part of the community. Comprehensive records detail all required information in order that staff can meet their individual needs. An excellent range of approaches is used by forward thinking knowledgeable staff to get an all-round picture of each child's perspective and learning. Softly furnished quiet areas decorated with hanging fabrics enable children to enjoy tranquil moments. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through a broad range of exciting activities that are very well planned by a designated festival coordinator. This encourages them to learn about their differences and similarities.

The setting has an extremely positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff follow clear policies in line with the code of practice. A designated staff member has attended an excellent range of training. Children's needs are comprehensively met and well documented. This is shared well with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that children receive the best support and that they are provided with continuity of care. Activities are carefully planned to ensure that they are inclusive for all children. Clear policies underpin practice and provide specific guidelines to behavioural expectations within the setting. Behaviour is consistently good throughout the session. Staff provide excellent role models; they are calm, caring and polite. They consistently provide clear explanations that are tailored to suit the age and stage of the child. A range of excellent strategies are used including positive reinforcement and reward certificates.

Parents are very warmly welcomed and speak highly of the setting. Staff are friendly and approachable and keep parents extremely well informed about all areas of their children's progress. Records are readily available for parents to share and contribute to and home diaries are used daily. Children truly benefit from this two-way sharing of information between parents and practitioners to enhance their learning and care. This promotes children's development in all areas and helps them fully contribute to the provision. An extremely informative notice board provides up to date information regarding recent updates and relevant information. Monthly newsletters are distributed to ensure that all parents are kept well informed. Detailed and concise written agreements provide details of children's individual needs in order that they can be looked after according to parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for extremely well by dedicated and experienced staff. Comprehensive policies and procedures underpin all aspects of the excellent practice. Stringent recruitment and suitability procedures ensure that children are cared for by dedicated staff who have an excellent understanding of child development. Staff are highly qualified and have a strong commitment to their ongoing improvement and development. Regular meetings combining staff from other settings enable staff to have new ideas and continue to reflect on their practice. Staff are aware of roles and responsibilities and work extremely well as a team to provide high quality care and make the most of the excellent environment. They communicate very well with adjoining providers and have good links with other practitioners housed in the children's centre.

The setting is managed by an efficient and competent manager who has a comprehensive understanding of the National Standards. The operational plan is well-organised and implemented. Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. A clear induction process ensures that the policies and procedures are consistently applied and that staff are well supported. Children are extremely settled and secure as good ratios are always maintained and the environment is extremely well organised. Arrival and collection times are managed safely and effectively and clearly documented in registers. All required documents and consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents' wishes.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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