

The Willows Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY270031 |
| Inspection date | 06 February 2008 |
| Inspector | Lisa Jeffries |
| Setting Address | 380 Redditch Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, West Midlands, B38 8PS |
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| Registered person | Virdee Daycare Limited |
| 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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Willows Day Nursery was registered in 1995 and is run by Virdee Day Care Limited. The nursery moved to the current premises in 2001. It is situated in the Kings Norton area of Birmingham and operates Monday to Friday. Sessions are from 07:30 – 18:00. The nursery closes on Bank Holidays and for one week at Christmas. Children may attend on a full-time or sessional basis. An out of school service is also provided. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 55 children at any one time and there are currently 53 children on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 14 staff to work directly with the children, all of whom hold or are working towards relevant childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher and the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted through effective health and hygiene procedures. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and paper towels are used to help prevent cross infection. In addition, tables are routinely wiped with antibacterial spray and staff follow a clear rota for general daily tasks to ensure that the premises are well maintained.

Children are learning about aspects of a healthy lifestyle through discussions about hygiene. They voluntarily access fresh water when they feel thirsty and they use and dispose of tissues suitably. Children demonstrate a positive attitude towards eating fresh fruit at snack time. Health issues are positively reinforced through pre-school topics.

Children receive a high level of care if they become ill or have an accident as staff hold certificates in paediatric first aid. To support this, first aid kits are accessible and fully stocked and children's health information is obtained at registration. Accident and medication records are consistently acknowledged by parents and the setting adheres to a sickness exclusion policy.

Children's dietary needs are well met. Meals are prepared in line with food handling regulations and staff responsible for preparing food hold certificates in food hygiene. Children enjoy activities such as making fruit cocktails and sandwiches and baking fairy cakes. Children savour a variety of nutritious meals including corned beef hash, spaghetti bolognese and sausages and mash. The setting has achieved a Healthy Eating Award.

Children's physical play experiences are promoted through a variety of activities. Outdoors, children use a range of equipment including climbing frames and slides, wheeled toys, ride-on toys and skipping ropes. Indoors, children take pleasure in music and movement sessions. They also enjoy circle games, ring games and action rhymes. Children benefit from lots of fresh air and exercise and become skilful in a range of movements.

Children's fine motor skills are encouraged through threading activities; cutting and sticking; making collages; using utensils to shape dough; drawing round stencils; constructing and chopping fruit. Children's independence is suitably fostered through everyday activities. They enjoy assisting staff and they take responsibility for simple tasks such as sweeping the floor, pouring drinks and tidying away their toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Although staff have secure knowledge and understanding of their roles in child protection, the child protection policy fails to meet the National Standards as it does not comply with local child protection procedures approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. As a result, guidance to staff is inconsistent and this potentially puts children at risk in the event of a child protection concern. Children's records are accurate and up-to-date and the key-worker system means that staff are knowledgeable about the children in their care.

Children play and learn in an organised environment. Child-sized furniture is available and there are plenty of tables for table top activities. Children move freely between activities and confidently self-select play equipment. Displays at child level help children to feel included.

Children use safe and suitable equipment as all resources are checked and cleaned regularly by staff. The outdoor area is checked prior to use.

There is a clear rota for tasks and appliances are checked accordingly. Children are supervised whilst using scissors. Staff use outings as a useful opportunity to discuss road safety and children benefit from gentle reminders about running and tying shoelaces. Consequently, children are beginning to keep themselves safe and show an awareness of space, themselves and others.

Staff take positive steps to minimise risks. For example, risk assessments are completed and staff conduct frequent visual assessments of each area. Signs are used to remind staff about security issues. The emergency evacuation procedure is displayed around the setting and fire drills are rehearsed termly with the children and recorded. Access to the provision is controlled and visitor identification is checked. There are systems in place for the safe collection of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and secure. They are welcomed by staff, separate easily from parents and are forming trusting relationships. Resources are laid out attractively when children arrive and they generally remain engaged in their chosen activities. The setting implements sound use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, supporting younger children and ensuring they can access the range of age-appropriate activities provided. Staff help children to consolidate their learning by using dual language materials, Makaton signing, providing additional resources, using effective questioning and through sensitively intervening in children's play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have realistic knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Overall responsibility for nursery education has been appropriately designated and plans show adequate coverage of all areas of learning. Staff share responsibility for evaluating activities and observations and assessments are used appropriately. However, plans do not show how activities are extended to provide challenge for older or more able children or adapted to provide sufficient support for younger or less able children. The pre-school coordinator is in the process of reviewing the planning system to ensure that children's individual learning needs are met. Children's starting points are established on entry to the setting and developmental profiles are maintained.

Behaviour is managed well to ensure a stable learning environment. For example, positive behaviour is praised and staff use consistent strategies. Children are given time to complete activities and they respond to boundaries. Children demonstrate a sense of responsibility as they tidy away their toys and use good manners. Accommodation, time and resources are generally used well to support children's learning. Children benefit from a balance of structured activities and free play. They access resources independently and usually receive direct attention from staff. However, after the children have eaten there is an extended period when staff are engaged with domestic duties and are not working directly with the children. As a result, children's needs are not always effectively met as they are sometimes without direction.

Children develop self-care skills such as dressing, using the toilet facilities independently and washing their hands. They demonstrate positive self-images and talk freely about their home and community. Steady friendships are formed and children develop close relationships with

staff. Staff act as positive role models and children are encouraged to value their own cultural identity.

Children's communication, language and literacy skills are promoted. For example, children identify and practise initial sounds in words and begin to understand that letters represent some of these sounds. Children recognise their names in print and learn that print carries meaning as they see lots of written language around the setting. In addition, children enjoy an increasing range of books and sustain attentive listening at story time. A variety of interesting materials are available to make marks including pencils, pens, paints, stencils and chalks. Children are beginning to write for different purposes such as within the role play corner. However, staff routinely add children's names to art work themselves. This means that children have limited opportunities to write for real purposes such as their own names.

Children's mathematical development is endorsed through activities which encourage them to name shapes, solve problems and use size language. Children use mathematical language through their play and practise counting. They learn the notion of floating and sinking through water play and use cars and ramps to make simple predictions. Children access a range of equipment including shape sorters, educational games and puzzles to extend their skills. Graphs are used to represent children's favourite colours and children enjoy recording using tally charts. Music and movement sessions encourage children to understand positional language. Additionally, children use construction toys to develop logical thinking.

Children's creative development is encouraged as they access realistic resources to support their role play such as kitchen equipment and dressing-up clothes. Children introduce narrative into their play and relate to personal experiences. They experiment with musical instruments and use buckets and washing-up brushes to learn about rhythm and beats. Different activities encourage children to produce patterns with paint and explore texture. They take pleasure in using chalks to decorate the slabs outside and spray water from bottles onto paper which is suspended from the garden fence. Children work creatively on a large scale and express their ideas through art. They enjoy the social times they spend together.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is extended as they investigate aspects of the living world. For example, through walks around the local environment and through discussions about the weather. Children explore natural materials including water, sand and dough and discover early concepts of science through cooking activities. In addition, children enjoy sessions where they taste different foods. Programmable toys are available to support children's learning and they independently access the computer. During one activity, children dug for worms and created a wormery. Children happily share their personal experiences and photographs through topics about their families.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children demonstrate a stable sense of belonging. They settle quickly on arrival and form positive relationships with staff and their peers. Activities and resources encourage equal opportunities. For example, children have access to traditional dressing-up costumes, books in a variety of languages, dolls, puzzles and other play equipment which show positive images of diversity and disability. Children are sometimes encouraged to celebrate festivals and there are dual-language signs displayed around the setting.

Children are valued as individuals as staff dedicate time to getting to know children and their families. Children's birthdays are celebrated and all children are treated with equal concern. They are personally greeted each morning and children are encouraged to participate equally in all activities. Where English is an additional language, parents supply key words and phrases to ensure children feel included. Staff also encourage children to learn Makaton sign language.

The setting has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Where appropriate, staff work alongside parents and external professionals to support children. Staff have received training and carry out focussed observations where necessary. Children learn about similarities and differences through different topics. Children behave well. They use manners and mostly play harmoniously together, sharing resources and taking turns. Kind and helpful behaviour is praised and staff use positive and consistent strategies. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents attend formal meetings to discuss their child's development and receive information pertaining to nursery education and how the Foundation Stage is applied at the setting. For example, parents are able to view plans and they have open access to their child's developmental records. In addition, parents share what they know about their child at registration to enable staff to build on their existing skills.

Parents receive a prospectus at registration which includes copies of the setting's policies and procedures. A notice board within the setting displays useful leaflets and additional information is disseminated through letters. Handover times are relaxed and friendly and the setting uses questionnaires to reflect upon their practice. Children benefit as daily discussions ensure staff and parents are aware of any important issues.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The setting's child protection policy is inadequate and has the potential to put children at risk as guidelines to staff are inconsistent. An operational plan is in place and all other policies and procedures are adequate, shared with parents and principally implemented in practice. Documentation is organised and stored appropriately. Staff and children's attendance is consistently recorded, showing actual hours of attendance. All relevant documentation is available for inspection.

The setting is organised to provide a welcoming environment which supports children's care, learning and play. Staff have a fair understanding of the National Standards and their responsibility to comply with these and the setting meets the conditions of registration. Children are cared for by adults who have had appropriate clearances.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have a suitable understanding of their roles and responsibilities which are implemented well. Some sound systems are in place to monitor the educational provision for three and four-year-olds, however, plans do not show how children's individual learning needs are met. Children are grouped appropriately and participate in a variety of activities. After mealtimes, the use of time and resources is ineffective as staff spend much of their time on domestic tasks. This means children are left without direction, interaction and support in their activities and learning, hindering their progress. At inspection, staff demonstrated that they welcome suggestions for improvement positively and are committed and enthusiastic about their role in children's learning.

Overall, children's needs are not met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider was issued three actions. Firstly, the provider was asked to conduct a risk assessment on the premises and to improve the safety of bedding and high chairs. Thorough risk assessments are now in place which identify action to be taken to minimise identified risks. New bedding has been acquired and all high chairs feature safety harnesses to ensure that children are protected.

The provider was also asked to improve hygiene practices regarding sleep provision, to make sure that fridge thermometers are used and to ensure that all medications are clearly marked. A thermometer is used to monitor the temperature of the fridge, sleeping children are supervised and medication is clearly labelled with children's names. These steps have had a positive impact upon the level of care offered to children.

In addition, the provider was asked to ensure that child protection procedures are followed and to improve the child protection policy to make sure it complies with all aspects of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The setting follows appropriate child protection procedures. However, the child protection policy fails to reflect guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board and does not meet the National Standards. As a result, this action will be carried forward following this inspection.

Finally, the provider was issued with a recommendation to review menus and create more opportunities for children to have fresh foods. Menus are rotated to ensure that children are now provided with a balanced, varied diet which incorporates fresh produce. Children's dietary needs are well met.

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 the 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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- ensure that all records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- ensure that the adult:child ratios relate to staff time available to work directly with children
- ensure that plans show how activities are extended to provide additional challenge for older and more able children and adapted to provide sufficient support for younger or less able 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