

The Willows Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY267101
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Inspector	Charlotte Jenkin
Setting Address	North Bradley C of E Primary School, Church Lane, North Bradley, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 0TA
Telephone number	01225 766594
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Registered person	The Trustees of The Willows Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

The Willows Pre-school opened in 2004. It operates from a room in a school in North Bradley. The group serves the local area.

There are currently 47 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 39 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with disabilities. There are at present no children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15 to 11.45 and 12.30 to 15.00 on Mondays and Tuesdays. On Wednesdays sessions are from 09:15 until 11:15 and 12:30 to 15:00, Thursdays the group are open from 09.15 to 11.45 and there is a session from 13.00 to 15.00 for two year olds. On Fridays there is one session from 09.15 to 11.45.

There are four staff members who work with the children, three have early years qualifications. A member of staff is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in warm, clean premises. They are not at risk of cross infection as staff implement hygienic routines throughout the session and children learn about the importance of hand washing routines. Children benefit from staff's up to date first aid qualifications, as well as their awareness of the correct procedures to follow if children have an accident or require medication whilst in their care. Children with specific medical needs are well cared for and this promotes the children's health and welfare in the setting. The sickness policy is formally shared with parents and staff act appropriately when children become unwell whilst in the pre-school. This limits children's exposure to unnecessary illness.

Children are encouraged to develop their awareness of healthy eating through the nutritious snacks they enjoy whilst in the setting. Staff gain information from parents regarding children's dietary needs and allergies. This information is recorded and any requirements are catered for. Children bring lunches to the pre-school on specific days and any perishable foods are labelled and placed in the fridge to protect the children's health. Children have access to water at all times and are able to help themselves to this during the session. Hence, children's dietary needs are well met.

Children demonstrate a positive attitude to fresh air and exercise and they eagerly engage in physical play. They are keen to go to the school hall for their physical education session and show a good awareness of space, themselves and others and they run around the room with their arms out wide to music. Children move in various ways, they change direction and are able to stop. They observe the effects of activity on their bodies, and talk about how their hearts beat faster and how they feel hot after exercise. Children develop skills in balancing and jumping off equipment. Children have access to an interesting outdoor environment which offers them a variety of activities that cover all curriculum areas. Children are able to climb and balance, explore nature, make marks and engage in creative play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and child friendly environment. They have pegs to hang their coats, named drawers for their work and there are attractive displays of their creations around. This helps the children develop a sense of belonging in the pre-school. Space is well organised into clear learning areas and this enables children to know where to access the activities and resources they choose to. The pre-school has a wide range of toys and equipment that promotes the children's development in all areas. These are stored at low level and children are confident in accessing those they wish to play with. Hence, they develop independence in initiating their own play and learning.

Children play in safe premises free from risks as staff check the premises daily for potential hazards and minimise these to promote safety and prevent accidents in the setting. For example, sockets are covered, toys are checked for breakages, the premises is all secure and is monitored by staff during arrival and departure times. Hence, children move around the premises confidently and are able to play in safety. All fire precautions are in place and the evacuation plan is practised with the children in line with the school's fire drills. This monitors the evacuation plan for its effectiveness. Outside is all safe and secure and equipment is checked for safety.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe in the setting, with staff reminding them of potential dangers. For example, how to use tools and climbing equipment correctly.

Children's welfare is suitably promoted in the setting as staff have a thorough knowledge of child protection issues and the procedures to follow in the event of concerns. The pre-school shares its child protection duties with parents, although they do not consistently record injuries that children arrive to the setting with. This has the potential to compromise the children's well being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive to the pre-school and are confident and keen to participate in activities. They form good relationships with staff and eagerly chat about their personal lives, being keen to share their news. Children play well together co-operatively, for example, during role play and when playing with the dough. They have a wide range of activities offered to them and are developing high levels of confidence in initiating their own play and learning. For example, getting out puzzles to solve and construction bricks to make models, where they spend long periods engaged in self-chosen tasks. Children develop good levels of independence with regard to self-help skills, washing their hands after messy play, putting on their coats and getting changed for PE.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They are offered a wide range of activities that offer a good balance of structured and child initiated play. Activity plans are detailed and have clear learning outcomes for children. Staff are confident in using questions to encourage children's thinking and in using everyday activities and routines to encourage their problem solving skills.

Assessments of children's progress are recorded in the Building Blocks assessment system. Staff know the children well and the progress they have made since attending the setting. Evaluations of activities are well used to show what children have learnt and understood during activities. However, these are not yet fully linked to assessments to ensure future planning includes children's individual areas for development.

Children sit and concentrate well during group activities. They confidently request the counting activity, where they compare the number of coloured bricks that the boys and girls take, enjoying counting together and saying if there are more boys than girls attending on that day. Children sit together well, share their news and use language well to make themselves understood. Children listen to their peers and engage in conversations. They show confidence in initiating their own play and in selecting resources to extend their learning. For example, when playing in the home corner children get paper and pencils to write the food orders of their peers. Children enjoy being creative and whilst playing with play dough they make currant buns and sing songs together. However, they are not encouraged to freely select materials and use these to represent their own ideas through modelling, collage and painting. Children use their initiative well and demonstrate this when building a model that is wobbly. They decide that to stop the model wobbling they need to 'Put some feet on it'. Children behave well in the setting, they share resources and take turns in their play. They observe the world around them, showing peers a leaf that is blowing outside the window and talking about the weather.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's self-esteem is well promoted by staff who value and respect the children in their care, and meet their individual needs well. The small group enables staff to establish good relationships with the children, and know their personalities and preferences. Children with disabilities are extremely well supported in the setting. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals working with the children to ensure they implement individual plans consistently to promote specific areas for development.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children learn about the lives of others through participating in activities that help them learn about other cultures. This is encouraged through practical activities, including crafts, dressing up and role play and food tasting. Children are respectful to their peers and show concern. For example, one child holds another's hand when he is upset.

Children's behaviour is very good. Staff are excellent role models to the children and are respectful to one another as well as the children. They implement the 'Golden rules' consistently and remind children of these when appropriate. Staff demonstrate a good awareness of how to manage children's behaviour. They talk to children about the consequences of their actions, remind them of the positive golden rules and use lots of praise and encouragement.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive detailed information regarding the curriculum implemented and the activities their children have been involved in. Children reflect daily on the activities they have enjoyed participating in and this information is relayed to parents. Parents are kept up to date with the current theme for learning through newsletters, and encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. This is through bringing in items into pre-school, helping out during sessions and taking home story bags to share with their child. Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress through parents evenings where they view their child's assessments and have opportunities to contribute to these.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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

Children are cared for by a suitable and well qualified staff team. Recruitment procedures are effective and comprehensive checks are undertaken on new staff to ensure they are suitable to be working with children. Induction for new staff enables them to have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their duties confidently. Children benefit from the high adult to child ratios as children receive good adult support as staff spend quality time playing and interacting with them, supporting their development through play. Hence, children appear at ease in the relaxed environment where they are well engaged in their play.

All required consents have been gained from parents regarding their children participating in activities and routines. This protects the children's well being and ensures they are cared for in line with parents' wishes. All documentation is securely stored on the premises and is available for inspection. Staff in the pre-school implement the majority of policies and procedures consistently to promote the children's welfare, care and learning. However, they do not consistently record children's existing injuries.

Leadership and management is good. The staff team are all very aware of their roles in the group and share all responsibilities, including leading activities and planning. The committee are pro-active in the pre-school and support staff well, enabling them to access good training and development opportunities. Staff reflect on their practice and identify areas of strength, as well as future training opportunities. They work closely with the lead teacher and any advice offered is acted upon to improve curriculum delivery. The pre-school has excellent links with the school and staff meet with the reception teacher to ensure they deliver children a balanced curriculum in line with the reception class. They also attend the reception class for stories, share the outdoor area and use the school hall. This eases children's transition into school.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to continue to review and appraise practice, implementing changes where appropriate. With regard to Nursery Education they agreed to have a higher expectation of what the children can achieve and to provide opportunities for children to explore natural materials within the room.

Staff review their practice by taking advice from the lead teacher and childcare development officer and through evaluations of activities. This enables them to make changes to improve both care practices as well as curriculum delivery. Staff help more able children move on through liaising with the reception teacher taking advice on how they can develop their skills and abilities further, especially in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Children have some opportunities to explore natural materials in the room, for example, sand and ice. However, they also have lots of natural experiences in the well used outdoor environment. For example, looking for bugs, planting flowers and digging the earth.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection no complaints have been 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.

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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 children's existing injuries are recorded and shared with parents

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):

- increase children's independence in freely selecting from a range of materials and in using these to represent their own ideas through painting, modelling and collage
- continue to link evaluations of activities to assessments of children's progress in order that they contribute to plans to move children onto the next stage in their progress

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