

Willows Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

The Willows Pre-school Playgroup opened originally in 1997 and was re-registered in 2009. The Willows operates from a mobile classroom within the grounds of Overdale Infants School in Leicester and can be easily accessed by all children. Children have use of the school toilets, playground and outdoor facilities.

A maximum of 36 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school and before-school group is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. It is open each weekday for morning and afternoon sessions during term-time and children come from the local community. There are currently 96 children on role who attend for a variety of sessions.

The Willows has experience of providing care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and the setting is in receipt of nursery funding. The setting employs 11 staff, 10 of whom currently hold relevant childcare qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children make excellent progress in their learning and development because they are consistently supported by a motivated and knowledgeable staff group. An extensive range of comprehensive and well organised policies and procedures are in place to effectively promote children's health and safety. A strong emphasis is placed on valuing the uniqueness and inclusion of each child and highly effective partnerships with parents, other providers and agencies ensure their individual needs are met. The provision for continuous improvement is highly effective as managers clearly communicate ambition to all staff and systems to drive and secure the settings further development are well established and embraced by all.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing the outdoor play area in order to further develop a more challenging and accessible space for children to play and learn.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Managers are experienced, dedicated and confident in their roles and are successful in inspiring and supporting the enthusiastic and professional staff team

who together provide a high level of care and learning opportunities for the children who attend. All staff work exceptionally well as a team, are dedicated to their work and support and acknowledge each others strengths. This creates a stimulating and vibrant play and learning environment for children and as a result, they flourish and make excellent progress in their learning. Self-evaluation reflects rigorous monitoring and clearly identifies what the setting does well and what it needs to develop further. Consequently, actions are well targeted and have a highly beneficial impact on the outcomes for children. Staff at all levels have a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding issues and have opportunities to attend regular training and continue to discuss and raise their awareness at team meetings and forums. Robust policies and procedures are implemented throughout the setting and all staff are actively involved in the reviewing processes. This means that any concerns are prioritised and dealt with appropriately and effectively. Comprehensive risk assessments are maintained and reviewed regularly and all staff assess and take responsibility for the environment, resources and equipment and successfully limit risks on a daily basis. As a result, children are cared for and play in a safe and secure surroundings. Robust procedures are in place for the safe recruitment and vetting of new staff which ensures that children are cared for by suitable and qualified adults. Effective processes are in place to ensure new staff are inducted from the onset. In addition, ongoing support systems manage the performance of staff which in turn promotes their ongoing professional development. Consequently, they feel valued and are eager to attend relevant training, take part in meetings and update their own knowledge and understanding. This means that they are able to contribute fully to any future developments.

Managers and staff have established effective working relationships with parents who are actively involved in their children's care and learning from the onset. All parents are warmly welcomed into the setting by the approachable staff group and are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the decision making on key matters affecting the setting through inclusive and established procedures. For example, through regular questionnaires, suggestion box and parents forum meetings and being involved in the reviewing processes of the settings policies and procedures. The setting provide information to parents about how they can support their children's learning, such as detailed information boards and invitations to attend parent workshops, such as a recent problem solving, reasoning and numeracy day. They have easy access to children's records, planning, photographs and examples of children's work. In addition, parents are actively encouraged to bring and share what their children have done at home to the setting where their achievements can be celebrated. Parental feedback indicates that they feel that their children are very happy and stimulated at the setting and that they have benefited greatly from spending time there. The setting is highly committed to working in partnership with others and has been pro-active in developing systems to establish effective working relationships. For example, close links with the local primary school means that children's transition from the setting to the Foundation stage in school is as seamless as possible.

Children clearly benefit and thrive in the setting they are in as the indoor environment is very well organised. A considerable amount of thought and planning from staff means that children have excellent access to a wide ranging

selection of stimulating activities and play opportunities. Children also have good access to the outdoor play area and a range of suitable and well presented equipment. However, this is an area identified for further development in order to provide more challenging and accessible play opportunities for children. The very effective key worker systems means that children and their parents are able to forge strong relationships with staff. The setting carefully considers staffs individual skills and the needs and wishes of both parents and children when allocating a key person. This means that they are able to develop a close partnership and staff gain an accurate understanding of children's individual care and learning needs. Staff are committed to working with parents, local advisors and other professionals in order to provide an effective and inclusive for all children. Both managers and staff are highly effective in ensuring all children are welcomed and integrated and are committed to taking steps to close identified gaps in children's achievements.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are confident, inquisitive and eager to learn and purposeful planning by key workers ensures children enjoy and take part in a rich and varied curriculum across all areas of learning. Staff are able to clearly identify what children can do and they use high quality observations to inform their planning, skilfully adapting activities and learning experiences that reflect children's individual interests and next steps. Children play and learn in a stimulating and welcoming environment which reflects the their backgrounds and the wider community. This helps to ensure that all children and their families feel welcomed and valued in the setting.

Staff's purposeful discussions and engagement with children help to develop their language for communication and encourages them to question and think critically. They have been pro-active in using their own personal skills to support all children and have introduced some innovative ideas, such as small pictorial prompts of key words which can be used with individuals or groups of children. This allows all children to confidently contribute to discussions and become fully involved in the setting. Children settle well, are confident and have forged excellent relationships with their peers and staff. They play co-operatively and are very well supported by staff as they engage in activities together. For example, a group of children spend a considerable amount of time using a broad range of equipment to build a den. They work together to find the best way to secure the frame using pegs, sticky tape and string. One child holds the frame, another cuts the string and the other secures it together in a knot, whilst a member of staff dressed in a cape and mask energetically joins in with a game of super hero's running around the playground. Children display high levels of confidence and self-esteem and staff ensure they celebrate all children's achievements. For example, a child shares a 'kite' that he has independently made with a staff member who enthusiastically acknowledges what he has created and joins in with the celebrations as it 'flies'. All children have a strong sense of security and belonging within the setting. For example, children move freely around the identified play space and are eager to share their toys and resources with adult visitors.

Children's creativity is effectively promoted as throughout the setting they have excellent access to a broad range of materials, tools and equipment in the very well resourced creative areas. As a result they are free to make their own pictures and build models whenever they wish. Children have frequent opportunities to enjoy music and movement. For example, as they spontaneously make their own music singing and using the musical instruments, marching in time to the beat or are introduced to and listen and dance to different types of music from around the world. Children have excellent opportunities to access equipment to promote their awareness of technology and how things work. With supervision they use a selection of tools and materials to build a 'spy rocket' out of wood and screws or skilfully use the mouse as they navigate their way around a computer programme. Counting and simple problem solving is introduced through daily routines and planned activities. For example, counting how many children are in the line and 'how many more children will we need to make 10'. A small group of children spend time deciding how they should pour the water down one end of a thin tube without it spilling. They finally decide on using the funnel and realise that it takes at least two to complete the task, one to hold it steady and the other to pour. Children are developing independent writing skills through a range of media and meaningful activities and they have excellent access to a broad range of books which are attractively presented in comfy reading corners both indoors and out. Children are clearly valued as individuals. For example, staff are proactive in using children's home language and resources such as the role play area and displays reflect diversity very effectively. This also helps children to value those that are different from themselves.

Children's health is effectively promoted. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are recognised and met and they encourage children to learn and understand how to keep themselves fit and well. They are encouraged to be physically active and enjoy free flow to the outdoor area where they can run, jump and climb and staff support children to follow good hygiene procedures in their daily routines, such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before meals. Children's understanding is reinforced as staff take the time to talk about why 'we wash our hands' or 'what exercise means for our bodies'. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through planned discussion, activities and access to resources. For example, books, appropriate computer programs and visual displays. Children's behaviour is exemplary and children are involved in writing and understanding the 'setting rules' through visual behaviour cards and group discussion. Positive behaviour is actively encouraged through constant praise and recognition of children's achievements.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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