

Willow Tree Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Yvonne Campbell

Setting address

St Werburghs Hall, Jack Brimble Centre Lynmouth Road,
Bristol, Avon, BS2 9YH

Telephone number

0117 9629555

Email

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

Willow Tree Kindergarten is a parent-led initiative. Teaching and learning methods are in line with the Steiner Waldorf philosophy for early years. The kindergarten was registered in 2009 and operates from a community hall at Jack Brimble Centre in St Werburghs, Bristol. The kindergarten is located close to the city farm. Children have access to an enclosed outside play area. The kindergarten is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The kindergarten opens during the following times: Mondays and Thursdays from 8.30am to 3.30pm; Tuesdays from 8.30am to 1.30pm; Wednesdays and Fridays from 8.30am to 12.30pm. The kindergarten operates during term times only. A maximum of 16 children may attend at any one time. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. There are currently 22 children on roll aged between three and six years. The kindergarten provides free early education for three- and four-year-old children. Three members of staff work directly with children. Staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level four and above. One holds a Steiner Waldorf Kindergarten Diploma.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming kindergarten where they are learning to value the relationship they have with adults and other children, although not all staff implement the setting's behaviour management strategies consistently. Staff have a sound understanding of each child's needs; activities provided support children's satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals, although problem solving and assessment systems require development. Children are kept safe and secure and enjoy many outdoor learning opportunities within their local area; they have increasing awareness and appreciation of the natural world around them.. Partnerships with parents and other early years provision are satisfactory. Staff evaluate their practice suitably and focus on key tasks to be completed, so are appropriately placed to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve behaviour management by staff, so that a consistent approach is taken
- improve assessment systems so that information about children's starting points is recorded in their individual learning records
- follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance and in regard to information sharing

- improve children's developing skills for the future by providing more opportunities for problem solving.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding children and know what would give them concerns for a child's welfare. The teacher has updated her safeguarding training since the last inspection and a written policy is in place. The policy is accessible to parents. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) guidance booklet is kept accessible for reference so staff know what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care; however, not all the kindergarten's procedures follow the LSCB guidance. This may result in insufficient records being kept to help keep children safe. Criminal Record Bureau checks are undertaken in line with the kindergarten's policy. Very thorough risk assessments are in place to minimise potential hazards to children's safety. Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe well.

Staff have completed a hard copy of the self-evaluation document of Ofsted's self-evaluation document. The document accurately reflects the strengths of the kindergarten and identifies some areas for further development appropriately, although some are overlooked. For example, the teacher is working closely with an early years teacher and an early years advisory worker from the local authority and has devised an action plan to address issues from the previous inspection. Improvements include the use of individual learning plans to identify and provide learning opportunities for each child. These are in use alongside Steiner Waldorf assessment systems. Staff continue their professional development. They attend several short training courses to increase their knowledge and skills.

The limited space in the community hall is used well to enable children to have choices, to play independently, join in with an adult led activity, take part in imaginary play and play outdoors in the garden. Many toys are made from natural materials, such as wood, wool and other textiles to stimulate children's senses. Children use play materials creatively to support good quality imaginary play; for example, they use long length of cloth to create dens. Staff make effective use of other resources too, such as those in the local community that are within walking distance of the setting.

Staff establish professional relationships with parents, who are very supportive of Steiner Waldorf methods. There are regular suitable exchanges of information and parents know they can speak to their children's key workers at any time. Regular parents' meetings are held to discuss children's progress. Parents, including fathers, offer practical support in maintaining the physical environment and they also help with fund raising events. Parents are comfortable in the kindergarten. They feel happy to stay with children who are not ready to be left or who have suffered emotional upset.

Children's individual needs are met satisfactorily. They are developing an understanding of how people differ through daily observation of others in the

multi-cultural community in which they live in through daily walks to the nearby city farm and the community garden. Children enjoy these walks and they are excited as they share what they have seen on the trip. Staff provide suitable opportunities for children learning about the celebration of cultural festivals such as Chinese New Year.

Staff are aware of the requirement to work closely with other agencies and have established information sharing protocol with early years professionals in the area. This means there is a shared awareness of the needs of the children in the community. Staff also attend joint training and review sessions.

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

Children show strong levels of independence. On arrival they start to play choosing the activities they want to be involved in. Most children are confident and articulate. They know how to engage with adults and other children on a social level and freely suggest that others join in their play. Children show an eagerness to help and be involved in basic tasks, so making a positive contribution to the kindergarten. They help putting the individual sheep skin mats out for morning welcome time with the whole group. Staff use early numeracy language asking one child to place the mat in a 'circle'. However, there are times when staff miss opportunities to encourage children to problem solve and use early calculation to help them gain useful skills for their future lives.

Most children are aware of the expectations for behaviour. They demonstrate good listening skills and respond almost immediately to the signal of the sound of a string instrument. They become quiet and receptive as they sit in a circle during welcome time. A small number of children do not comply but this expectation. However, this does not overtly disrupt the activity as just one or two voices break the silent atmosphere.

A group of children, enjoy play at the baking table. They engage in pleasant conversation and individuals sing spontaneously. They work purposefully to knead the dough and to grease the baking tins to make the buns for the snack to be eaten the next day. Some children make creative representations with the dough likening the shapes to "a fat lizard" and "a dinosaur". Children enjoy imaginary play they both talk and act out scenarios using the topic of princesses. Several older boys group together and play alongside each other. They enjoy more robust physical play and appear to gain greater enjoyment playing outdoors in the garden. However, on occasion when playing indoors, the noise level rises. Not all staff manage children's behaviour fully effectively. Staff have systems in place for observation and assessment of each child's progress. Individual development plans are also in place. However, although children are observed to be progressing appropriately, progress is not measurable in relation to their starting points in the kindergarten as this information is not recorded in their individual learning records, although individual staff know these for their key children.

Children's good healthy is promoted well. They are familiar with the procedure for washing their hands before baking and snack time. Each child has a small drying cloth with their names. This reduces the risk of the transfer of germs between children. Children also wash their hands after visiting the animals at the city farm using the hand washing facilities there. Children enjoy nutritious snacks based on a dietary plan used in Steiner Waldorf setting. A different type of organic grain is used in the home-made snacks. Children also have fresh fruit and vegetable. They benefit from exercise outdoors and return to the kindergarten invigorated and refreshed ready for the story and group singing.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The premises are fully enclosed and staff monitor arrival and collection times. Children are familiar with procedures for staying safe. When out walking in the community, high visibility jackets are worn. Children are learning to listen for and be aware of traffic. Staff organise and practise fire drills on a regular basis so children know to respond promptly to the signal to leave the premises quickly.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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