

The Willow Set Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sara Bailey

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 Willow Set Pre-School and Sun up/Sun down out of school club registered in 2011. It operates from a purpose-built, sole use premises within the school grounds of Stoke St Gregory C of E Primary School, Stoke St Gregory, near Taunton, Somerset. The pre-school were previously registered at a different address. Children have access to a large playroom and fully enclosed outside play areas.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is registered for 24 children under eight years of age, eight of whom may be under three years of age. They take children from two years of age. There are currently 28 children on roll within the early years age range in the pre-school and 18 on roll of all ages in the out of school club. The pre-school operates from 9.00am to 3.15pm and the Sun up/Sun down club from 7.45am to 8.45am and 3.15pm to 5.30pm during term time only. The inspection took place during the Sun up out of school club and the pre-school hours. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. The setting supports children with special education needs and/or disabilities.

The setting is committee run. The manager has a BA Hons in Youth and Childhood Studies, holds Early Years Professional Status, she also has a Take- five- for- play qualification. The deputy holds a level three qualification in Early Years and is a Forest School leader; one member of staff holds a level three qualification; one holds a level two qualification in Early Years. One member of staff has a degree in Arts and is working towards level three in Early Years. Two relief staff/ out of school club staff have Degrees in Arts, both of whom are doing their level three in playwork and one is also doing her level three in Early Years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Willow Set Pre-school and the Sun up/Sun down Out of School Club implements both the welfare requirements and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage in an exemplary way. Children's individual needs are exceptionally well met through a range of exciting planned activities across all six areas of learning. Consequently children make significant progress towards the early learning goals. Some children have begun attending other settings; although no links have been established with them, there is minimal impact on the children. The setting's capacity to maintain continuous improvement is excellent due to the robust monitoring and reflective practice of the manager and her team.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- initiating links with new settings children attend, early on in their admission, to support their individual needs and further develop the communication systems already in place with other settings children attend.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding children is given the highest priority by all staff. There are comprehensive policies and procedures in place to ensure all aspects of safeguarding are shared with parents and as part of the induction process for all staff and volunteers. Staff undertake daily risk assessments of the premises and outside area. These are monitored through unannounced monthly visits by the risk assessment officer of the committee. This helps ensure any potential safety issues are quickly identified and addressed. The setting is extremely secure and staff are vigilant about visitors to the premises, using an intercom system to allow access.

The leadership and management of the setting are exceptional. The manager leads by example and has high expectations of staff. She inspires staff to work towards ambitious targets through high team morale and extensive monitoring. She encourages the staff to assess their own work, which in turn means they are highly reflective and striving to improve. Regular appraisals and team meetings ensure all staff are valued and contribute to the ambitious vision for the setting. Any minor gaps in their knowledge are quickly rectified through in-house training or discussion. The setting's self-evaluation reflects the whole team's dedication to embedding ambition and continuously improving outcomes for children. They develop and enhance every aspect of their practice and documentation as they grow in knowledge through training and taking into account parents' or other professional's feedback.

The staff are highly committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. The quality of information-sharing is excellent, with a constantly updated website with general information and policies as well as the option of paper copies of anything for parents without internet access. This promotes equality. Communication is highly effective at all levels, with regular formal and informal discussions between parents and their child's key person as well as communication diaries, informative notice boards and very professional forms and documentation. Partnerships with other settings are generally good but the systems used for recording the information shared between the settings does not have the same level of professionalism or confidentiality as all other documentation. For example, another setting that a child attends has not yet been contacted to share information. This enables staff to further support the child's individual needs through continuity of care between the settings.

Equality and diversity are promoted exceptionally well. Staff are very aware of individual needs and meet these meticulously. For example, staff routinely sign

with all of the children to aid communication. They have reminders displayed attractively around the room to assist staff or visitors with the correct sign language for different colours and key words. Some children have laminated key-ring picture cards to help them communicate their individual needs. Children with specific speech and language needs are given time to express themselves and be listened to. The Christmas story is explored in meaningful ways to enable children to understand the religious celebration. Other cultures and countries traditions are also explored.

Staff deployment is highly effective, with staff supervising and engaging with children inside and outside as required with free-flow between the two areas. The layout of the room enriches children's learning with designated areas, easy access to the bathroom facilities to develop independence and well laid-out, quality resources for children to self-select from. The setting make their own range of bingo games, using wrapping paper and pictures. These incorporate children's individual interests or areas for development and promote sustainability. The setting is highly stimulating, inviting and enables children to thrive within a very safe environment.

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

Children have excellent levels of achievement and demonstrate outstanding progress in developing skills that will help them in the future. They are routinely counting using large numbers, counting backwards, adding and subtracting as part of their everyday circle-time discussions. Children develop excellent language skills and develop their confidence through daily opportunities to stand in front of the group to 'show and tell', linking items from home to the colour of the week. Children are creative and supported with innovative ideas from enthusiastic staff, some of whom have Arts Degree backgrounds, bringing a different approach to creativity, such as with colour exploration and glass painting. Children learn about floating and sinking through group activities using their own individual experiments. Observations of children's learning are extensively used to identify their next steps for development across all six areas and influence future planning.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe through everyday discussions and experiences, such as learning about water safety whilst pond-dipping and at Forest School where they use real tools and fires. Children participate on local walks to learn about road safety, ride on a bus and have visits from the Police to extend their knowledge. Children wear stickers if they have an accident so that parents are alerted to the fact and speak to their key person and sign the necessary forms. This promotes positive partnership with parents at busy home time periods and further meets children's individual needs.

Children thoroughly enjoy being active and playing outside. They relish riding on wheeled toys and climbing on apparatus, whatever the weather. Children make choices about their play with free-flow between the inside and outside. They are prepared for playing outside on cold days with drinks of hot chocolate, which they

are excited about. They greatly benefit from a wide selection of fruit for snack, provided by parents on a daily basis, and chopped up by staff to enable children to self-select from a platter. Children recall the unusual fruits they enjoy, such as Sharron fruit. Children are independent in their hygiene before and after eating, and after using the toilet. They learn about good hygiene through the staff's positive role modelling and discussion. Children make choices in their health, such as when they need to rest and help themselves to their water bottles as required.

Children are extremely well behaved and respond positively to requests, such as helping to tidy up, with eagerness. They are motivated by a reward sticker system, certificates and trophies, which boost their self-esteem. Children are respectful of each others' needs and form very positive relationships with their peers and staff. Children learn how to share and take turns, listen to each other and value different opinions. They enjoy linking the pre-school with their home life by taking a pre-school teddy bear on holiday with them and returning with photographs. These are available for children to enjoy in the book corner and linked to a world map to develop their knowledge of the world. Children's voices are heard in the planning of sessions, activities and experiences. Children flourish at this setting.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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

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