

Willow Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 117167 |
| Inspection date | 30/05/2012 |
| Inspector | Heather Morgan |
| Setting address | Litchaton Way, Woodford, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon, PL7 4RR |
| Telephone number | 01752 347170 |
| Email | |
| 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

Willow Childcare Centre (formerly known as Woodford Rascals Day Nursery and Out of School Club) first opened in November 1996 and is managed by Woodford Schools Trust. It operates from a purpose built building, with additional provision for the Out of school club. It is located on the same site as Woodford Primary School in Plympton, a residential area of the city of Plymouth. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It may care for no more than 114 children under 8 years; of these, not more than 78 may be in the early years age group, and of these, not more than 30 may be under 2 years at any one time. The Out of school club may care for no more than 36 children under 8 years in the out of school club at any one time. The setting is open on weekdays between 7.30am and 6pm for 51 weeks of the year, with a holiday play scheme operating during school holidays. There are currently 331 children on roll, 235 of whom are in the early years age range. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language. A total of 38 staff work with the children, 34 of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications, 26 at Level 3 and eight at Level 2. Two members of staff are qualified to degree level, one of whom holds Early Years Professional status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

In this outstanding setting, the whole staff team work together exceptionally well and pay excellent attention to meeting each child's individual needs. Consequently, all children make very good progress in their learning and development. The very strong management team provide superb leadership, ensuring that ambition and drive are embedded effectively. The dedicated staff team demonstrate a great capacity to maintain continuous improvement. Safeguarding is given the highest priority and considerable emphasis is placed on keeping children safe and secure at all times. Overall, the setting engages effectively with parents and carers, and other professionals to promote continuity in children's learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop existing systems to regularly exchange information about children's progress and development with all parents and other early years providers to further enhance continuity in children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is outstanding. Staff have a secure understanding of the comprehensive policies and procedures in place to keep children safe and respond appropriately in the event of any concerns. Robust recruitment procedures include careful vetting of all adults to assess their suitability to work with children. The premises are very safe and secure, and regular assessment of risks identifies the steps taken to keep children safe within the premises, whilst out on visits and exploring the nearby woodland. The dedicated staff team are expertly led and managed by a strong senior team. Regular and insightful reflection on their practice encourages them to seek ways to constantly improve outcomes for children. There is a culture of self-evaluation and the team have recently successfully completed the 'Bristol Standards Award', which is an externally recognised indicator of quality. There is a shared ambition to maintain continuous improvement which is successfully achieved as staff strive to meet individual and team targets. Staff have regular opportunities to access training and professional development events and are very enthusiastic about implementing new ideas. The setting welcomes all families and children and successfully supports the individual needs of all children so ensuring equality of opportunity for all. Close observation and monitoring of children's progress is reviewed regularly in order to quickly identify where additional support might be needed. Excellent relationships with a range of other agencies ensure that children promptly receive the extra help that they need. Staff sensitively raise children's awareness of cultural diversity through the use of a range of resources and activities that introduce them to different languages, foods and music. The setting works very closely with the neighbouring school and other schools in the locality. Transfer documents and visits are used effectively to ensure children make a smooth transition to school. Staff share information with other early years settings that children attend which develops their understanding of children's interests and progress, although they have not developed these procedures to consider sharing details of how they intend to build on what children already know and can do. All areas of the setting are very well resourced and special care is taken to ensure that the resources in each base room reflect the developmental needs of the children. There is an interesting combination of natural and made resources that provide children with rich, varied and imaginative opportunities to explore colour, texture and aromas. Excellent use is made of the wonderful outdoor environment and forest area where many children spend much of their day. The resources are used to provide exciting and stimulating activities that capture and sustain children's interest exceptionally well. There are excellent relationships with parents and carers, who highly value the service provided and are quick to acknowledge the progress their children make. Information is exchanged with parents and carers using a variety of methods and many make valuable contributions to their children's 'Learning Journeys'. This supports children's continuity in learning very well.

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

Children are supported very well by the highly skilled staff team who interact sensitively with them in order to support their individual choices. They use an excellent range of techniques, such as open-ended questioning to encourage children's independent learning and consequently, all children make very good progress. Close observation of the children at play is evaluated regularly and information is used exceedingly well to develop activities that reflect children's current interests and build on their prior learning. Attractive and informative 'Learning Journeys' provide a clear record of children's development and many include additional information from home to further promote continuity in learning. Staff share their assessments with other settings that children attend, although they do not routinely discuss how they develop children's learning. Children develop very healthy lifestyles as they embrace the regular opportunities they have to play outdoors in all weathers and enjoy nutritious and varied meals. They make their own decisions about when to have a drink or snack between meals. Children are supported extremely well by the familiar adults who care for them and develop a sense of security and well-being. They learn to play safely both indoors and outdoors and have excellent opportunities to begin assessing and managing risks for themselves when they play in the forest area. For example, children explain and demonstrate how to move carefully around areas with prickly plants and stinging nettles and play within agreed boundaries. Children develop a real sense of community as they make friends and visit other rooms within the centre. Older children take great care of the younger ones as they play outdoors in a shared area and show concern for others, noticing when they are tired or unhappy. Their behaviour is excellent and they are supported very well in developing an understanding of the importance of sharing and taking turns. Children enjoy exploring food and music from around the world and learning to speak French as they develop their awareness of cultural diversity. There is a very strong focus on developing children's confidence and self-esteem. They are given many opportunities to make independent choices in their play and to become independent at meal times as they serve themselves. Babies and children learn simple signs to aid their early communication and enjoy sharing books or completing puzzles with the support of a familiar adult. They are well-motivated and move freely between the indoor and outdoor environments as they engage in purposeful play activities. They have a real interest in the natural world and proudly identify different varieties of birds and grow vegetables that are later cooked and used to enhance their meals. Children use numbers spontaneously in their play and routines. For example, they count how many children are going to a forest school session. They use most successfully a range of technological resources, such as electronic toys, cameras and computers to support their learning. The exciting range of activities that sustain children's interest very effectively and the sensitive interaction of the staff supports all children in becoming independent and curious explorers, providing a firm foundation for their future learning.

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

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| 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

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| 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 | 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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| 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

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| 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