

Willows Pre School and Playgroup

Greenleas Lower School, Derwent Road, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, Bedfordshire, LU7 2AB

Inspection date

04/10/2012

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The pre-school is friendly, bright and welcoming to children and their parents. Children are happy and settled in the child-centred environment. Children experience many good quality play and learning experiences that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.
- The staff really care about the individual child. The staff team has bonded well and they are very supportive of one another.
- Staff take pride in their presentation of the children's learning journeys. These mirror the pre-school strong sense of identity and provide a precise picture of children's stage of development and their interests.
- The partnership with parents is strong and ensures excellent support for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Effective and integrated partnership working with the school and the after school club is not fully established.
- The new tracking system is not yet fully embedded to ensure children's progress over time is maximised.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main indoor playroom and the outdoor areas. The inspector, pre-school manager jointly observed the lunch club session and were joined for a short time by the Headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with the pre-school manager and the Early Years Co-ordinator.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working in the setting, relevant sections of the self-evaluation form, action plans and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents and carers as expressed in written references and comments made after consultation meetings.

Inspector

Susan Marriott

Full Report

Information about the setting

Willows Pre-school opened in 2009 and re-registered in 2012 when it changed from community-run status to school-run status. The purpose-built premises are within the grounds of Greenleas Lower School in Leighton Buzzard. The governing body of the school has taken over the management of the pre-school. The setting serves the local and

neighbouring community. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. Children attend from age two years and the setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school opens each weekday during term time and sessions are from 8.55am to 11.55am, lunch club 11.45am until 12.20pm and afternoon sessions from 12.20pm until 3.20pm. The premises includes two playrooms and enclosed outdoor play area. In addition, the pre-school may use some of the school's facilities.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff, the manager is qualified to level 4 and is currently studying for her degree, four members of staff are qualified to level 3, one to level 2 and two members of staff are currently on training courses. Two members of staff are employed to work with children with special educational needs and one holds relevant qualifications to level 3. The pre-school provides care for 30 children in the early years age group. Currently, there are 91 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop the effectiveness of partnership working with the school and the after school club in order to meet the needs of the children by: enhancing the provision of quiet space to meet the needs of the two-year olds; improving the use of the lunchtime routines to promote children's independence and choice and ensuring that the children enjoy a healthy, balanced diet
- embed the new planning and tracking systems to support children's achievements over time.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children experience an enjoyable programme of learning and development. They are very well supported by the friendly and caring staff who work hard to meet their individual needs and go about their work in an extremely calm and purposeful manner. Staff develop positive relationships with parents and children, observing children and getting to know them really well as individuals. Available resources are used well and the staff create a bright stimulating indoor environment for children in this pre-school. The doors to the outside area are open throughout the sessions, enabling children to enjoy free flow access to outdoor play in the fresh air. Toys and equipment reflect the seven areas of learning

and further development work is already planned to enhance the good outdoor facilities and opportunities for the children.

All children make good progress in the prime areas of learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered very well. Speaking, listening and communication skills are promoted every day through planned activities and discussions, using skills and resources from Government programmes such as 'Every Child a Talker' and 'Letters and Sounds'. Children develop communication skills through conversations with peers and adults who use open-ended questions such as 'What do you think?'. Staff are keen to ensure all children can be heard, and large group time and small group time is used to encourage the quieter children. Staff have identified that younger children are not using the book area much at present.

Children engage in role play together and invite a staff member to have her hair set in rollers in their new hairdressing salon. They transport resources from a tray in the garden so that they can decorate the fence in readiness for their 'party celebration' on the climbing frame. Children gather enthusiastically around the interactive table, learning how to use touchscreen technology. They explore the texture of cornflour gloop and wonder as the yellow and blue gloop mixes to make green. Children recognise their names, count at registration time and talk about the rules of good behaviour. Children demonstrate high levels of independence at the snack table as they pour their own drinks and help themselves to fresh bread and fruit. Staff engage children in discussion about healthy eating at snack and at lunch time.

Planning and assessment are closely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and planning demonstrates that staff identify clear intentions for learning. This secures purposeful teaching and learning and good quality provision. Each individual child has a developmental progress file and they are completed by their key person. From each observation a next step is produced and carried out to enhance children's learning. Progress trackers are then completed to show the progression in children's learning, but the tracking is a new process and is not yet fully embedded to provide children with maximum support over time. The pre-school manager is highly competent in monitoring the tracking system on her computer to check the progress of individuals and various groups of children to ensure that no child gets left behind.

The key person system supports engagement with all parents. Parents contribute towards an initial assessment of children's starting points on entry through their 'All about me' sheets which celebrate their uniqueness and individuality. Parents speak highly of the pre-school and have nothing but praise for the dedication of the hard working staff.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are confident to try new activities because the staff create an atmosphere of encouragement and security. Most activities are or become, open-ended. No child fails, it's enjoying 'having a go' that is important and praised. Children are praised for the process and not the outcome. Free play encourages problem-solving through both adult-led and child-initiated activities. Behaviour is good and children talk about acceptable and

unwanted behaviours at registration time. For example, they readily declare that 'biting and kicking is not nice'.

All children are forming appropriate bonds and attachments, are happy and enjoy their time in the pre-school. Every child at Willows receives a full induction and settling in plan, devised in partnership with parents. During the first few visits the child's key person spends time with the child and their family, laying the foundation for the new relationship. The staff find out as much as they can about each child from both them and their parents. There is always a familiar face waiting for the children when they arrive. Particular care is taken to ensure that the children who attend part-time school with wraparound care are assigned to the key person who works across the whole day. She is there to meet the children from school at the end of the morning and bring them across to the pre-school, providing a valuable link to ensure continuity of care and well-being.

Planning is flexible to ensure that the educational programmes for the prime and specific areas of learning help all children to reach expected levels of development. Each child in the pre-school has a Personal Line of Development (PLOD) which is used to meet their needs and interests and is used in planning for the next steps. The PLODs are used to make up the mid-term plan, then subsequently, the short term planning. Parents are able to have an input to these PLOD's and this encourages them to be an active participant in their child's learning. Any comments from other professionals are included in these, for example IEP's or speech and language goals.

Children's good health and self-care is generally promoted well. For example, tissues are readily available inside and outdoors for children to wipe their own noses. However, the organisation of the lunch time session does not always optimise the opportunities for children to be as independent as they could be. Nevertheless, children are supported to acquire the skills and capacity to develop and learn effectively, and be ready for the transition to school. Lots of outdoor and physical play opportunities are offered daily, including the use of ride-on equipment, climbing frames, slides, music and movement sessions and play with small apparatus such as balls and hoops. These all help to build self-confidence, self-esteem, co-ordination and promote physical health and well being.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Children clearly feel secure and happy in this friendly, bright and welcoming environment created by staff who hold appropriate levels of qualification and work exceedingly well together as a team. Children's welfare is promoted well as the pre-school has effective safeguarding procedures. The staff have appropriate knowledge of such issues and give good priority to every aspect of safeguarding practices. Good physical security prevents intruders entering the premises and an efficient record of visitors is kept. Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Risk assessment is comprehensive and appropriate action is taken to minimise hazards to secure a safe environment for children. For example, when a lightning strike has de-activated the security gate electrics, the pre-school manager raises staff awareness and deploys an extra member of staff to monitor the gate. Particular attention has been given

to the management of arrival and departure procedures to secure children's safety.

Reflective practice is an integral part of daily practice and the staff regularly meet to discuss what is going well and what needs to improve. Formal self-evaluation is well established and provides a very comprehensive account of the pre-school's strengths and areas for development. It has been completed in consultation with the staff, section by section. The staff work collaboratively with the advisory services and openly welcome their input and support. They keenly implement any suggestions for improvement which they believe to be beneficial for the children and devise action plans to ensure that implementation is monitored effectively.

Staff have a clear understanding of anti-discrimination, enabling them to implement appropriate policies and provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They work with parents and carers to ensure that they understand each child's individual needs, background and culture and are therefore able to meet their needs and promote children's awareness of individuality. Several different languages are spoken by some children in addition to English. Their cultures are respected by the provision and many signs are annotated in additional languages. Children with special educational needs are quickly identified, benefit from individual education plans, and are referred to other professionals when necessary, so that they receive the help they need.

The pre-school works generally well in partnership with others to secure smooth transitions and continuity of care for children. Parents receive thorough information about the setting and their children's progress, for example, through letters, daily talks with staff and parents consultation meetings. Lovely compliments are written by parents, for example, 'We are very pleased with how our child has settled in at Willows...she is really happy here and is looking forward to coming in for more sessions next term'. Another parent states 'I have noticed an improvement in her counting skills and her alphabet over the last few weeks and her speech has come on loads since she has been coming to Willows'.

Since the school took over responsibility for the operation of the pre-school, an Early Years Co-ordinator has been appointed. Her role is still establishing and she is aware that integrated partnership working with the school and the after school club with which the pre-school shares its premises, is not fully effective. For example, the school kitchen is not providing the full advertised menu for hot meals for the pre-school children. Unresolved organisational issues between the after-school club and the pre-school means that suitable quiet space is not always available. She has introduced new systems for documenting observations under the Revised Early Years Foundation Stage but these are not yet embedded to ensure that children's progress is maximised.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs
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		of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY445294
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	794294
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	91

Name of provider	Greenleas Lower School
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01525371735

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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