

The Willows Daycare Nursery

The Willows Day Nursery, Mereside, Soham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5EE

Inspection date	05/03/2013
Previous inspection date	07/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Practitioners skilfully use open-ended questioning which encourages children to think for themselves and helps them learn to solve problems.
- Children behave well and develop positive relationships, as practitioners offer them consistent boundaries and support them as they learn to share and take turns.
- Parents appreciate how well all staff at the setting know their children and value the relaxed and friendly environment.

It is not yet good because

- Arrangements for staff supervision, appraisals and self-evaluation are not used to accurately prioritise improvements, including practitioner knowledge and understanding of assessment and monitoring of children's progress. As a result, there is some inconsistency in practice across the nursery.
- The arrangements for assessing children's progress between the ages of two and three years do not currently involve parents and are not completed in time to inform the two year check with the health visitor.
- Children whose home language is not English do not see or hear their first language in the environment on entry, which does not help them settle.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the three base rooms, and in the two outdoor areas, including a joint observation with the manager of a vegetable preparation activity in the pre-school room.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision, and spoke to children's key persons as appropriate during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation evidence and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day as well as information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Deborah Hunt

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Willows Daycare Nursery is one of four privately owned provisions and was registered in 1993 on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in purpose-built premises in Soham, Cambridgeshire. A school holiday play scheme operates in a mobile building within the same grounds. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. The setting is accessible to all children and there is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting employs 20 members of childcare staff, of whom 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including two who have a foundation degree in early years. The setting opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 80 children on roll in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education places for three- and four-year-olds. It supports who speak English as an additional language. The setting receives support from the local authority, has begun the local authority quality assurance scheme and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- introduce appropriate arrangements for the supervision and appraisal of staff to develop a culture of support, coaching, team work and continuous improvement
- revise the system for reviewing children's progress between the ages of two and three years, to ensure parents are involved and that the assessment is provided in time to inform the Healthy Child Programme health and development review at age two.

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

- develop self-evaluation in order to drive improvement, including monitoring the educational programmes throughout the nursery, ensuring staff use Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage to accurately guide their assessment of children's progress
- develop the use of assessment to include learning information when gathering children's starting points on entry to the setting, to guide practitioners' accurate assessment of children's next steps
- enhance the arrangements for providing children whose home language is not English with opportunities to develop and use their home language in their play and learning by using key words and including them in labelling in the environment.

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

Children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development as the majority of practitioners show a sound understanding of the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan a range of interesting, varied, child-led and adult-initiated activities that engage and motivate children. Practitioners carry out observations and make assessments of children's learning. Most effectively translate these into tailored activities that fully meet children's individual needs and offer them challenge. However, in the baby room, practitioner knowledge is less secure, which means the assessment of children's progress is not always effectively monitored. This leads to inconsistency in some aspects of teaching, resulting in younger children not always receiving individualised learning experiences based on their interests and capabilities. Basic information relating to children's starting points is collected from parents during induction visits and as children start. However, practitioners do not always use this

information consistently to guide them in identifying children's next steps in learning and development. A review of children's progress is made after two weeks to ensure their stage of development is accurately assessed. Parents are informed about their children's progress through the children's learning journals and bi-annual parent consultations. Additionally, initiatives, such as, the 'boomerang books' children take home and 'wow' boards outside each room, encourage parental contributions. The books enable parents to try out suggested activities with their children at home and the boards invite them to add their own photographs and comments. These ideas promote children's self-esteem and have a positive effect on their learning and development.

Children enjoy easy access to a suitable range of resources and play equipment. A group of pre-school aged children enjoy playing in the bubbly water outside. They create imaginary games with dinosaurs, using the rocks and stones they find in the water as boats and 'safe islands'. Other children enjoy following a recipe as they make their own play dough; they listen carefully to the practitioner and their language develops as they hear words, such as, 'squash' and 'squeeze'. Younger children enjoy making Mother's Day cards, selecting the colour paint and tissue paper they will use to make the flower on the front. The practitioner explains carefully to them that the paint and glue will need to dry before they can 'write' inside the card. Children enjoy playing in the sand; they learn to share and take turns as the practitioner encourages them to fill the moulds to make their sandcastles. They are introduced to mathematical concepts as they do so and discuss whether the mould is full or not. An adult joins in by extending the activity to discuss visits to the seaside and holidays. During outdoor play, practitioners are playful with the children. They run about with them and young children are supported to take risks as they try to use the climbing frame. Practitioners maintain children's interest by changing what it is offered outside. For example, babies love the bubbles and older children enjoy activities, such as planting their own potatoes.

Children's communication and language is supported well through the use of the 'Every Child a Talker' scheme throughout the nursery. They enjoy daily times to share stories and rhymes, can choose books to take home each day, and pre-school children have a 'poem of the week'. Practitioners interact well with children and encourage their active involvement in the story sessions, which effectively promotes their self-confidence. Generally, practitioners engage well with children during most small and larger group activities, sharing conversations with them and role modelling appropriate language. However, practitioners do not find out key words in the home language of children who speak English as an additional language as they begin attending. This does not enable them to hear familiar sounds or help them settle easily. Children learn to use tools that promote their hand-to-eye coordination, such as scissors and knives as they cut real fruit and vegetables. These activities help to prepare children for the next stage in their learning reasonably well.

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

Children display confidence and have clearly formed secure attachments with practitioners. Staff show warm affection for the children and encourage them to develop positive relationships with one another. For example, when two children both want the

same toy, they are encouraged to work together to find a solution. The key person system ensures children feel settled and safe. Children and parents are invited to induction visits so they meet staff and other children. However, despite boards outside the rooms which show key working groups, and the induction visits, some parents are unclear about who is their child's key person. In addition, the process for completing the Early Years Foundation Stage progress check at age two is not shared with parents or clearly understood by practitioners. As a result, young children's learning is not fully supported by a consistent approach between the home and nursery.

Children learn about the importance of physical exercise through regular walks in the local area and outdoor play. The outdoor area offers children opportunities to run and use their energy. They play with a selection of wheeled toys, sand and water, and enjoy gardening activities, which promote their physical skills moderately well. They enjoy fun activities, such as spontaneous walks in the snow, which also contribute to their growing understanding of how to remain healthy. During dance or physical play, they feel their heartbeat before and after the activity and learn about the effect of exercise on their bodies. Food is varied and nutritious; children sit together to eat and share foods, such as, crackers, fruit and raw vegetables. Meals are freshly cooked on the premises and children enjoy a wide variety of healthy, nutritious meals. Practitioners sit with them to share snacks and meals, acting as good role models and helping children learn that mealtimes are social occasions. Children learn simple mathematics during snack time, as they look at the cards to see how many pieces of fruit they can take from each bowl. Children's growing awareness of how to be helpful is encouraged appropriately as practitioners encourage them during practical activities, such as tidying away their own beakers and plates after snack time. The setting is brightly decorated with examples of children's artwork so they feel welcomed and valued.

Children are supervised well and, through suitable practitioner deployment and measures, such as safety gates, they are kept safe. Practitioners help children consider hazards for themselves. For example, during a small group activity which involves cutting peppers, carrots and cucumbers, children discuss how to use knives safely. Visual images displayed above the doors in the setting help children understand the fire drill. They discuss fire safety procedures, and practise evacuating the building frequently, in order to keep themselves safe. Healthy practices are increasingly well established and much work has been done recently on portion sizes and healthy eating in relation to the 'eatwell plate' initiative to provide children with the right balance from each food group. The separate baby milk kitchen helps ensure that babies' health needs are met. Children wash their hands at appropriate times and older children are able to relate this activity to the prevention of an upset tummy. Nappy changing arrangements and potty training are suitably hygienic and well managed.

Established relationships with local schools mean children are suitably prepared for their transition into the next setting. Many attend the setting's before and after school clubs which are run in the local schools. This means children are familiar with the school environment before they start their formal education. Children are progressively encouraged to develop independence, for example, as they learn to put on and take off their hats and coats, and as they develop the ability to think about and solve problems

themselves. Parents are invited into the setting to find out about the arrangements for their children's move into school, which helps them prepare their child for moving on.

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

The manager of the setting understands the responsibility she holds to oversee the implementation of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Two deputies have recently been appointed to support the manager and promote consistency of practice across the nursery. Policies, procedures and other documentation suitably promote children's health, safety and welfare. Medical information is collated and regularly updated to ensure children can be well cared for. Accidents and incidents are monitored periodically to identify any possible areas for concern. Risk assessments and daily checks are robust enough to effectively minimise risks to children, who also help to complete the routine daily checks. They help ensure the area is secure outside and love to search for 'lions' as they do so. All staff have completed first aid, child protection and food hygiene training. Therefore, they have a sound understanding of safeguarding issues and know how to protect children in the event of a concern.

There are sound relationships with other providers, such as the local schools and children's centre. This enables the setting to support children to make positive transitions. The setting is suitably equipped with accessible resources that promote children's ability to make their own choices. There is a sound partnership with parents and carers that suitably promotes children's well-being. Staff and parents are friendly together and there is ample time allowed for informal discussions at the beginning or end of each day or session. Parents speak positively about the setting and particularly about the staff. They appreciate the small, friendly setting and feel their child is valued. Self-evaluation is still at an early stage, which means that it does not effectively identify and prioritise all areas for improvement. For example, staff supervision and appraisal arrangements are informal and are only just being reviewed to embed a more formal process. As a result, there is some inconsistency in practice with regard to the robust implementation of systems of observation and assessment across all areas of the nursery. This inconsistency has been the main focus for improvement and, therefore, other areas have not been prioritised to further improve the service for children.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs 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 action. 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	221551
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	818198
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	80
Name of provider	Willows Daycare Nursery
Date of previous inspection	07/06/2011
Telephone number	01353 624821

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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