

# Willows Farm Day Nursery

Willows Farm Village, Coursers Road, London Colney, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL2 1BB

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 07/05/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 05/08/2013 |

| <b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>                          | <b>This inspection:</b> |   |
|--|-------------------------|---|
|  | Previous inspection:    |   |
| 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

- Children are effectively safeguarded through robust policies and procedures, which are understood and implemented efficiently by the management and staff team.
- The nursery uses successful strategies to engage all parents within the nursery, encouraging them to contribute observations from home to their child's learning record. They work closely with other agencies involved with children. As a result, children's learning is supported well.
- Children are building close attachments with staff. They ensure that their home routine is followed wherever possible, for example, settling babies to sleep. All staff implement the detailed care plans for each child, so that children's care needs are consistently met.
- Effective teaching methods are used which encourage children to evaluate and build on their own learning by identifying what they do well and how they could improve. In particular, children's physical development is promoted well as they are offered various opportunities to build skills, such as, balancing and controlling the ball.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to provide even more opportunities for children to be independent at snack time, for example, by serving themselves food and pouring their own drinks.
- Staff do not consistently use the effective communication strategies for all children with English as an additional language.

## 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 all rooms in the nursery and talked with the staff.
- The inspector viewed the areas of the premises and garden used by the children and visited the adjacent farm with a group of children.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff members and a range of other documentation, including the safeguarding procedures and complaints procedure.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents, as recorded in written questionnaires and reference letters.
- The inspector reviewed the provider's hard copy self-evaluation form as provided prior to inspection.

## Inspector

Lindsay Hare

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Willows Farm Day Nursery was registered in 2013 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The holiday play scheme was registered in 2011 and is on all three registers. The provision is located in a purpose built building adjacent to Willows Farm, London Colney in Hertfordshire. It is managed by Kids Play Childcare who operate a number of other settings. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play and they have use of play areas within the farm area. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 263 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four-year-old children. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 34 members of childcare staff. Of these, 22 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3, including one with Early Years Professional Status.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- maximise the opportunities for children to be independent, particularly at snack time, for example, by serving themselves food and pouring their own drinks
- use the already effective communication strategies for children with English as an additional language, so that all children benefit from staff being able to use key words in their home language.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy a good range of learning experiences that reflect their individual needs and interests and therefore captures their attention and imagination. They are engaged in their play and are active learners. Staff are well qualified and skilled at quickly getting to know the children. The assessment of children's learning is thorough and helps to ensure that each child is developing in line with expectations, based on their age and ability. Observations are used to identify children's next stage in their learning and inform the planning. Parents share what their children do and enjoy at home and are involved in their children's ongoing learning. For example, the 'wow moments' and 'golden leaf' stickers enable parents to contribute achievements from home. This enables staff to effectively plan for children's learning needs. Staff have effectively completed detailed assessments in relation to the progress check for children aged two. This is shared with parents and is

used to identify any areas where children's progress is less than expected and the plans developed to address any concerns. Staff work with other professionals to adapt equipment and the environment. This ensures children with special educational needs and/or disabilities can explore activities more easily and are based in the room, that best meets their needs, rather than age. As a result, children are making good progress. There are strong strategies in place to ease communication for some children with English as an additional language, such as a visual timetable, key words and notices displayed around the room in different languages. However, not all children who have English as an additional language are consistently supported to make the best progress possible.

Staff use effective teaching methods, such as, modelling language and repetition to help children communicate. For example, with younger children, they repeat words back to the child and emphasize the animal sounds they hear, when they visit the farm. Staff use skilful questioning to encourage children to recall past events and to think for themselves. For example, children trying on glasses and sunglasses, were asked questions about why they couldn't see through some of them. They were able to recall when the role-play area was an opticians and knew that the sunglasses made things look dark and that you needed the right glasses for your own eyes. Young children learn about cause and effect as they are able to use the low level switches to turn lights on and off safely. Children have opportunities to attend football skills sessions with a coach. This has had a big impact on promoting children's physical development, as they learn skills, such as, balancing and controlling the ball. This also helps the children to develop their concentration, listening skills and how to follow instructions. Young children are provided with low level apparatus for them to climb and increase their mobility and coordination. Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered well. Staff support them in their moving up sessions and children are encouraged to express their feelings and describe their emotions in different ways, such as, drawing how they look when they feel angry.

Flexible activity planning involving the children, means that children have balanced opportunities to play independently and to participate in adult-directed activities. They take an active role in their learning as they observe and evaluate what they do well and what they could do next time. Children make progress in line with the expected developmental levels. Planning shows how activities are differentiated to ensure that children's individual needs are met and they are challenged. The thoughtful provision of some resources means that children are encouraged to explore and experiment. For example, children were observed making 'soup', using glitter, sand and sequins and then using the long laces as their skipping ropes. Children develop early literacy skills, as they use the writing station and borrow books to share at home through the library scheme. Signs and notices around the rooms demonstrate to children that print has a meaning. Staff encourage children to explore numbers in everyday situations, such as counting heads before going outside and counting how many rabbits they can see on the farm. Daily trips to the farm to see the lambs and themed activities, such as, planting bulbs in spring, build on children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Consequently, children effectively develop the skills that prepare them for the next stage in their learning and their eventual move onto school.

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

The nursery makes good use of the key person system to aid communication and support partnership working with families. This helps to ensure that children feel secure and form close relationships with their key person and make confident transitions from home into the nursery. For example, a letter is sent to parents informing them who their child's key person is, a photo board of each staff member and their key group is displayed in the room. Staff work closely with parents to meet children's needs by following children's individual routines. For example, babies were comforted and rocked to sleep as they would be at home. Age-appropriate resources are accessible and children are encouraged to explore these, making choices in their play and expressing their preferences. Children are well-behaved and show an able understanding of appropriate social behaviour. Children's self-esteem and confidence are promoted well as staff offer them support and encouragement and provide them with achievement certificates and praising them for their efforts.

The nursery's detailed procedures support new children in quickly settling. For example, key persons spend time with parents and gather information about their child's needs, abilities and preferences. They use this information to inform the initial planning of activities and resources. All staff are aware of the detailed health care plans for children so that they are able to consistently meet their individual needs. New children feel secure, staff are aware of how best to comfort them. Children's transfers onto the next room are promoted well within the setting as they attend moving up sessions where their key person visits with them, sharing information. Staff consider friendships when arranging these visits and photos of the next room are used to make children familiar with the new environment. Parents are also invited to attend these visits and the new key person updates the all about me record at every transition within the nursery. Staff support children moving onto school, by inviting class teachers to come and visit the children in a play situation, talk to the key person and share their learning journeys. Staff are still establishing partnerships with schools so that they can develop books with photographs of the school and obtain a uniform for children to dress up in.

Children show some understanding of safety, for example, they know that they need to wear wrist straps on outings to the farm. They practise the emergency evacuation procedure when there are fire drills both within the nursery and on the farm. Therefore, children are becoming familiar with the escape route in an emergency. Sensible health and hygiene habits are emphasised through consistent routines and discussions. For example, children change into their boots before going on the farm and wash their hands after visiting the animals. At times, children are encouraged to manage their own personal needs, such as, putting on their coats to go outside. However, opportunities for children to be independent are not fully maximised. For example, children were observed serving themselves soup at lunch time but were not encouraged to serve themselves food or pour drinks at snack time. Children are provided with a well-balanced diet. Staff ensure that all children have daily access to use the outside areas, where they can dig in the mud and use the climbing apparatus and stepping stones. They also visit the farm in small groups on a daily basis. The pre-school room layout lends itself to more free-flow play between

indoors and outdoors.

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

Arrangements for safeguarding children are strong and well embedded. All staff have received basic safeguarding training and regular discussions at staff meetings ensure that they have a good understanding of the process to follow should they have any concerns about a child in their care. There are robust recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children, including agency staff. Comprehensive risk assessments and daily safety checks of each room ensure that the setting is safe and any hazards are removed or minimised. In addition, all accidents are collated and put into a tracker each month which highlights any rooms that may need further monitoring of hazards. This contributes to children's enjoyment of their time at the setting by enabling them to play in a safe and secure environment. The nursery implements a range of clear, detailed policies and procedures. These are provided in a folder for parents, along with the complaints procedure clearly displayed in the reception area. The nursery ensures that all complaints are recorded.

The manager has recruited a staff team who are mostly well qualified and experienced and ensures that the same agency staff are used, so that they are familiar with the nursery. Therefore, they are able to support children effectively in making good progress towards the early learning goals. Ratios are maintained in each room and staff are deployed effectively, for example, taking small groups out to the farm or to do soccer skills. As a result, the supervision of children is good. The management's thorough monitoring of staff performance means that their work is valued and they are supported well in developing their professional practice. For example, the formal appraisal system, ongoing supervision meetings and room observations are used effectively to check on performance and review the training needs of each staff member. The views of staff are highly considered and contribute to the continuous improvement of the setting overall. For example, staff were given a questionnaire asking 'how can we get the nursery to outstanding?'. Highly effective monitoring of the planning and assessment of children's learning means that the management has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and how this impacts on children's progress. They are able to identify where children are not making as much progress as they could be and know what needs to be done to improve this.

The setting is building strong partnerships with parents and keeps them well informed about the provision. For example, a notice board outside displays children's activities, so that parents can talk to their child about what they have been doing. Parents and other family members are invited to attend the various social events that are held, such as, Mothers Day, when they are invited to come in and plant flowers and make peppermint creams with the children. Staff have daily verbal exchanges with parents as well as sharing the communication books with them at collection. Parents are fully involved in their child's learning from the start, talking with staff about their 'hopes and dreams' for their child and attending parents evenings to discuss children's progress. The setting has

established good links with other professionals in order to support children and their families. The children's centre staff visit regularly and there has been involvement from a physiotherapist to advise staff how they can further support those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, all staff were taught how to use a feeding tube. The nursery has also established links with the fostering team and speech therapist. There are practical procedures in place for sharing information with other early years settings. Teachers from the various schools are invited to visit and meet the children in a play situation, look at their learning journal and talk to the key person. They are also invited to the graduation ceremony at the end of term. This ensures a shared understanding of children's individual needs can be developed. The management has a clear vision for the setting and the thorough self-evaluation includes the views of children, parents and staff. For example, parents are asked to complete surveys twice a year and children are asked to take photos of what they like and don't like, around the nursery and then talk about why. This feedback is continually used to inform and develop action plans that will improve the provision for children. For example, current plans include introducing specialised workshops for parents on relevant issues, such as, potty training, reading and how to play with your child.

### **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 | Requires improvement | The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.  |
| 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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

|                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | EY426319                 |
| <b>Local authority</b>             | Hertfordshire            |
| <b>Inspection number</b>           | 968171                   |
| <b>Type of provision</b>           |                          |
| <b>Registration category</b>       | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| <b>Age range of children</b>       | 0 - 17                   |
| <b>Total number of places</b>      | 161                      |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>  | 263                      |
| <b>Name of provider</b>            | Kids Play Ltd            |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 05/08/2013               |
| <b>Telephone number</b>            | 01908209216              |

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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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