

Willow Bank Pre-School

Duffield Road, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 4RW



Inspection date

25 February 2015

Previous inspection date

14 March 2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Systems for sharing details of children's next steps in their learning and development between staff are weak. This means that staff interacting with children do not always know how to challenge them to achieve their best.
- Staff reliably identify children whose learning and development is not at a typical level for their age. However, the management monitoring is not robust enough to ensure that staff challenge all children appropriately through timely interventions.

It has the following strengths

- The early years practitioner ensures that most children access stimulating education programmes. Experienced staff nurture children's imaginations, inquisitiveness, and social skills.
- Staff consistently give priority to the safety of children and support their growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.
- All staff attend regular training, which is helping to improve their knowledge and the quality of learning experiences they provide for the children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- implement a consistent and effective approach for key persons to share children's individual next learning steps with other staff, so that day-to-day learning experiences help all children to make good progress
- where assessment indicates that children require additional help, ensure that this is provided as quickly and effectively as possible, both within the pre-school and, when necessary, by securing support from specialist services.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a wide range of activities across all areas of the pre-school and talked with staff and children about what they were doing.
- The inspector reviewed documents and procedures relating to safeguarding and equal opportunities, and checked a selection of other policies.
- The inspector sampled a range of children's records, the pre-school's planning, evaluation, and the information exchanged with parents and external professionals.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and reviewed written communication from parents.
- The inspector met with the leadership team.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

A hard working team of caring staff provide children with interesting and varied learning experiences each day. Staff share weekly planning with parents, which helps to provide continuity in children's enthusiasm for learning and exploration of new topics between home and the pre-school. Staff routinely observe children's progress as they follow their own interests, target new skills in small groups, and gather as a whole team. Most children make good progress in their learning and development. However, systems for sharing children's next steps in learning with other staff and parents are weak. This means that staff do not always provide activities that challenge children, nor meet their individual needs. Staff reliably identify when children's development is not at a typical level for their age. However, they are sometimes slow to seek, co-ordinate and implement ways to help children progress quickly, to close gaps in their learning prior to their moves to school.

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

Most children are confident and happy, as they easily access a wide range of interesting activities and learning experiences indoors and outdoors. Staff prepare plenty of opportunities for children to strengthen physical skills in the fresh air. They spark children's imaginations, creativity and sense of discovery. Children develop strong relationships with their key person, who provides encouragement, care, and teaching. However, the key-person system is not fully effective. The weaknesses in sharing information about children's needs and achievements means that, at times when the key person is busy elsewhere, other staff do not know what support to offer. Children do not therefore, always have the self-confidence to play with other children in the group. Parents' say they find staff approachable and that their children enjoy attending the pre-school. They are also generally pleased with their children's progress and the way staff were preparing children for school. Staff work closely with teachers in the local schools and regularly visit other early years settings when children attend joint placements. This helps staff provide reassurance and continuity of care as children move on to new activities and locations.

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

The manager has appropriate systems to implement most of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, arrangements for establishing children's starting points and monitoring their progress over time are weak. This means the manager cannot be sure that staff challenge all children appropriately, through timely interventions and good quality teaching. The manager and local authority make it possible for staff to undertake a wide range of further training initiatives. This is helping staff offer more diverse, good quality experiences for children, who show considerable enthusiasm for learning. Staff model courtesy, fair play, and

kindness to others and the children's behaviour reflects staff expectations.

Setting details

Unique reference number	148695
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	841848
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	59
Name of provider	Willow Bank Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2012
Telephone number	01189 27 2338

Willow Bank Pre-school registered in 2001. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term time. Sessions run from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. A lunch club operates from 11.45am to 12.30pm. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three, and four. Of the eight staff who work with the children, seven hold relevant qualifications at level 2 and above, including one who holds Early Years Professional Status.

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