

Willows Farm Day Nursery and Preschool



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

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| Inspection date | 8 January 2018 |
| Previous inspection date | 31 August 2017 |

| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| | Previous inspection: | Requires Improvement | 3 |
| Effectiveness of the leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | | Good | 2 |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | | Good | 2 |
| Outcomes for children | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The key-person system is strong. Settling-in processes for children attending the nursery and moving within base rooms are effective. All children settle well and are supported by warm and friendly staff to feel secure. They form strong attachments and bonds with staff and their peers from their early days.
- Teaching is good. Staff engage babies in developing their curiosity. For example, they encourage hide and seek games. Babies learn new vocabulary and develop their social skills as they play together. Staff engage toddlers in experiments using tools and instruments as they test different materials. Children engage in stimulating activities.
- Pre-school children develop mathematical language and concepts very successfully. They learn to read a salt dough recipe and use scales and cups to measure the ingredients they need. They are eager to take part. Staff challenge children's learning well and they develop their skills at a good pace.
- Throughout the nursery, managers deploy staff effectively. They complete daily risk assessments and staff are attentive towards children and supervise them closely.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not consistently reinforce children's growing awareness of how hygiene practices contribute to their good health.
- On occasions, staff do not make full use of opportunities to teach children about their personal safety and the consequences of their actions.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance opportunities for children to learn about the importance of good hygiene and how it links with their health
- strengthen children's understanding of their own personal safety.

Inspection activities

- The inspectors observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- One of the inspectors joined the pre-school-aged children on a visit to the on-site farm.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection. They completed several joint observations of activities with managers.
- The inspectors held meetings with the nursery managers and area manager. They looked at relevant evidence of the suitability of staff working at the nursery and holiday club, and reviewed evidence of their qualifications and training certificates.
- The inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Karina Hemerling

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff attend safeguarding training and are confident to identify the signs of abuse. They know the steps to take to protect children from harm. Highly qualified managers supervise staff's teaching closely. This helps to improve the standards of teaching. Managers complete ongoing staff suitability checks and they review policies with staff regularly. This helps to reinforce their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Well-qualified staff have regular training and professional development. They often bring ideas to enhance children's learning. Managers, staff, parents and children reflect on the services provided to help ensure continuous improvement.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Well-qualified staff make clear assessments of children's learning. They work with parents and managers to track children's progress. Children receive prompt support to meet their needs, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Staff promote children's early literacy skills well. Babies identify their belongings, such as their beds when they are tired, by looking for their own photographs. Staff speak slowly and clearly as they teach toddlers about shapes and colours. Toddlers respond and repeat. Pre-school children create an exciting treasure hunt with staff and find items that are described to them. Staff plan activities that challenge children's learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff work with parents to tailor practice to children's individual requirements. Children are comfortable and staff are very caring towards them. Staff are good role models and work with parents to support children's emotional well-being. Children are confident and behave very well. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to enjoy exercising, outdoor play and fresh air each day. Children have nutritious meals and fresh drinking water available at all times. They are encouraged to learn about cultures, festivals and the local community. Children care for animals, learn about life cycles and nature and visit the farm areas on a daily basis. This helps to support children's physical development and understanding of the wider world.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress from their starting points. They have continuous support to promote their learning between home and the nursery. Children learn through play. For example, babies sing nursery rhymes with staff as they learn to operate musical toys. Children enjoy a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Toddlers concentrate well as they use blocks to build a tall tower with staff and peers. Pre-school children show advanced early literacy skills. They enjoy exciting monthly reading projects, creating props and pictures about their favourite stories. Children are prepared well for school.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY426319 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 1120178 |
| Type of provision | Full-time provision |
| Day care type | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Age range of children | 0 - 8 |
| Total number of places | 188 |
| Number of children on roll | 257 |
| Name of registered person | Kids Play Ltd |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP900863 |
| Date of previous inspection | 31 August 2017 |
| Telephone number | 01727 829535 |

Willows Farm Day Nursery and Preschool registered in 2013 and is operated by Kids Play Childcare Group. The nursery employs 62 members of childcare staff. Of these, 41 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including two early years teachers and seven with qualified teacher status. The nursery opens 7am until 7pm Monday to Friday, all year round. It also operates a holiday club from 8am until 6pm Monday to Friday during all school holiday periods. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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