

Inspection of The Willow Set Preschool

Stoke St Gregory Primary School, Huntham Lane, Stoke St Gregory, TAUNTON,
Somerset TA3 6EG

Inspection date: 24 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are highly confident, self-motivated, cooperative learners. They develop extremely inquisitive minds and even children new to the setting explore the exciting environment with enthusiasm. High-quality teaching encourages children to make predictions, test their ideas and find ways to solve problems. High staff ratios ensure that all children receive outstanding support and feel extremely safe. Staff morale is excellent. The manager sensitively monitors staff and children's physical and emotional well-being as she is very aware of the impact this can have on children's development.

The highly effective partnership with parents enables staff to have an excellent understanding of what children can already do and what additional support they may need, as soon as they start at the pre-school. This enables staff to quickly plan enriching experiences with children's needs and interests in mind. Staff skilfully help children to embed their learning and extend it further each time. For example, children now know what ingredients they need to bake a cake and the order they need them. They know the process the mixture goes through, from dry, to liquid, to solid once cooked.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are highly respectful to staff and each other. They arrive happy and excited and relish their time at the pre-school.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager and deputy work directly with the staff and children and are highly effective role models. For example, the manager inspires children's love of stories and excites their imaginations. Using her 'special coat', which is full of different resources, she takes the children on a magic carpet ride. They become animated and enthralled as they contribute their own ideas, naming planets as they zoom into space. The manager's work and example underpins the staff's enthusiasm so that they engage children in their learning very successfully.
- The manager and deputy support apprentices exceptionally well to ensure children always receive the same very high standards of teaching. The manager is passionate about continuing her own and the staff's development in order to keep their practice outstanding. Recent training in supporting children's language and communication skills has led to high-quality speaking and listening opportunities so children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are excellent communicators.
- Children take part in discussions, show amazing concentration and use new vocabulary highly accurately. For instance, they say we have lungs to breathe, and a heart to pump blood. Staff challenge older children exceptionally well in preparation for school. For instance, children are shown a pig and a type of

shoe, and when asked for words that rhyme with dog, they say hog and clog.

- The manager meticulously oversees the curriculum and each child's development. She has addressed how to get boys more involved in developing their writing skills and there has been an amazing difference in their achievements.
- The committee greatly values the staff. Together they reflect on their practice extremely effectively, involving parents and children to embrace continuous improvements. For instance, they have worked extremely well with the school staff to prepare children for school and assess their development even more accurately. As a result, children settle immediately, with no anxiety, ready to learn.
- Parents comment extremely positively about the way staff fully involve them, and sensitively and respectfully support the whole family. They continually share essential information and resources to provide highly informative support for children's learning and care at home and in the pre-school.
- Children gain a highly positive self-image. Staff very sensitively use play and activities for children so that they notice their similarities and differences. They learn they are unique and that there are many ways of speaking, living and celebrating. Staff skilfully encourage children to acknowledge their own and other's feelings. For example, when someone is sad or grumpy staff help children express what they and the other children can do to make them feel happy again.
- Children love being energetic and using the outdoor environment. They also have use of the school playground where they move with excellent control and coordination to the music 'Chariots of Fire'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's safety is given high priority. The manager and staff have a rigorous understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They methodically follow their procedures to protect children from harm and quickly notify the authorities as required. The manager regularly checks staff suitability and that their knowledge of procedures is up to date and accurate. Children engage in an extensive range of excellent activities to develop their awareness of safe practices. For example, they have an exceptional knowledge of using tools safely, being safe around fire and putting on a helmet, elbow and knee pads to use a skateboard.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY431515
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10125871
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 13
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	206
Name of registered person	The Willow Set Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904580
Telephone number	01823 491 567
Date of previous inspection	27 April 2015

Information about this early years setting

The Willow Set Pre-School and Sun up/Sun down out-of-school club registered in 2011. It operates from purpose-built premises within the school grounds of Stoke St Gregory C of E Primary School, Stoke St Gregory, near Taunton, Somerset. The pre-school operates from 9am to 3pm 50 weeks a year. The Sun up/Sun down club is open from 7.30am to 9am and 3pm to 6pm during term time and all day in the school holidays. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 10 members of staff and an administrator. The manager holds early years professional status. Five staff are qualified at level 3 or above. Two have a level 2 and one member of staff holds a level 1. Three staff are working towards higher qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elaine Douglas

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and the quality of teaching indoors and outdoors.
- The views of parents and children were sought and the inspector spoke with staff at convenient times.
- The manager discussed the quality of teaching following a joint observation with the inspector.
- A leadership and management discussion was held with the manager.
- Safeguarding information was checked.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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