

Inspection of Willingtots Preschool

The Peace Memorial Hall, Church Road, Willington, BEDFORDSHIRE MK44 3PU

Inspection date: 4 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children come into the setting gleefully. They say goodbye to their parents and begin their morning routine. Children hang up their own coats, wash their hands and register themselves by finding their own name and putting it into a plant pot. Children have developed positive and warm relationships with the caring staff. When selecting an activity to do, they invite staff to share their experiences with them. They seek cuddles and reassurance when it is needed and enjoy the responsibility of carrying out tasks for others.

Children are confident. They are enthusiastic and proudly show visitors that they have received a sticker for helping during a story time. They are motivated and eager to take part in activities that are planned for them. For example, children are joyful as they begin to use a china tea set. They use fruit teabags and pour it out into cups for their peers and adults. Children smile and talk about the colour of their tea. They express their interests as they talk to staff about their favourite colours. Staff support this learning by encouraging children to smell their tea and talk about what fruits could be in their teabags.

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

- Children build meaningful friendships and enjoy each other's company. They learn to take turns and share. For example, children enjoy playing in a pretend supermarket together. Older children act as role models for younger ones. Younger children are proud as they copy and relay words that older children say. Older children praise and encourage younger children to play with them.
- Staff prioritise access to the outdoors. They understand the importance of children having exposure to nature and fresh air. Children use a community garden with play equipment in. Staff support learning in the outdoors by adding activities to their garden, such as number hunts, sandpits and a book corner. Children also go on outings around the setting. They use clipboards and pencils as they go on an autumnal nature hunt. They eagerly search for conkers and squirrels, while staff support their early writing skills by encouraging them to tick the objects that they have identified off of their lists.
- Mathematics is introduced during every activity. Children cut open tomatoes and staff encourage them to count the seeds. As children look at fruits and vegetables, they weigh them on scales and discuss which one side is heavier. Children play and spontaneously use mathematical language with each other as they use a large abacus to sort colours.
- Children are encouraged to think about their own feelings. Staff support them with their well-being. During story times, staff open dialogue about the characters in the book, and children are keen to talk about how they may be feeling. Children's self-esteem is boosted as staff encourage children to do

things for themselves, giving them a sense of achievement. For example, children put on their own coats before going outside and use an electronic tablet to take photographs of things they have discovered.

- Staff promote children's communication and language skills well. Staff are quick to identify whether children need early intervention. They know their children well and make sure to support them based on their individual needs. For example, staff understand that a child's confidence can be a barrier for them to be able to communicate with others. They run small group times to support children to develop their confidence around their peers. However, staff miss opportunities to let children respond to questions that they are asked. This means that children do not have opportunities to be able to think for themselves, as questions are answered for them.
- The manager continues to strengthen partnerships with parents. Staff communicate with parents in a range of ways. These include daily face-to-face meetings, emails, questionnaires, social media and an online platform, which details children's learning. Parents comment that the team are 'special' and that they are 'amazing'. They state that children enjoy attending and note how children have progressed since starting at the setting, particularly in their speech.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children actively talk about potential risks in the garden. They point to wet patches on the climbing apparatus and dry it with help so that they can use it. The manager ensures that all staff receive regular training and updates about child protection and safeguarding issues. This enables staff to identify concerns about a child's welfare and confirms the process for reporting concerns to the setting's safeguarding lead. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that all staff are, and continue to be, suitable to work with children. Staff attend paediatric first-aid training. Staff carry out regular risk assessments to ensure that all children are safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- allow children more time to respond to questions asked, to encourage them to be able to express their own ideas.

Setting details

Unique reference number	219266
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10234347
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	12
Name of registered person	Willingtots Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP901847
Telephone number	07972 148 085
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2016

Information about this early years setting

Willingtots Preschool was registered in 1971. The pre-school employs two members of childcare staff, both of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm, with an optional lunch club from 12.15pm until 1.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amy Clarkson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children.
- A joint evaluation of an activity was carried out with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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