

Inspection of Willows Day Nursery

Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Mandeville Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 8BD

Inspection date: 8 August 2023

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 are confident to explore their play space. Staff give children reassurance and encouragement to extend their play within their familiar rooms. They support children's transition to their next stage in learning effectively. They share children's current interests and stages of development to help their new key person to plan for their developmental next steps. For example, young children settle quickly and confidently into mealtime routines.

Children show high levels of curiosity, exploring the space and resources available to them. They want to know more. Older children use their voices to question and discover. For example, they ask adults how to make a paper airplane, watching demonstrations and attempting to copy the techniques themselves.

All children have continual opportunities to explore both indoor and outdoor environments. Staff recognise that some children learn better outside than in. For example, they extend the challenges for some children to make marks using twigs in the mud. Other children use role play to show a clear understanding that writing carries meaning through labelling and making shopping lists.

Children show a caring attitude towards their peers and staff. They form close attachments to familiar staff, who provide a nurturing environment for children of all ages. For example, children thoroughly enjoy cuddling up with their friends and staff for a story, and they openly share their experiences with their peers.

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

- Children develop strong independence skills through daily routines. They use familiar tasks and follow clear explanations from staff to learn how to meet their own care needs. For example, young children find their own drinks, older children serve themselves at lunchtime, and pre-school children find their own coats and boots. They put them on and hang them up on their own pegs afterwards.
- Staff are eager to develop their skills, practice and knowledge. Managers help them to identify their strengths and areas to develop. Staff share practices, new skills and interest with others. Staff adapt and change practices to help meet the needs of individual children attending.
- Staff engage with children in interesting and stimulating play experiences, using effective skills to challenge and extend their thinking. Some staff are particularly skilled at promoting children's love of books as they read stories. For example, they very successfully draw children in the story using a range of props, questions, pitch and tone when reading. This helps children to stay focused and positively engaged in the storyline.

- Children learn to use rules and boundaries within their play. Staff give clear direction to support children's understanding of expectations. For example, children explain the rules of hide and seek to others. Staff are positive role models for children. They listen to explanations of positive behaviour and the impact unacceptable behaviour has on others. Children confidently confide in staff when they feel upset by their friend's actions.
- Staff know how to promote children's language and speech development in all rooms. Babies babble, confidently sharing early conversations with staff. Toddlers develop simple sentences, using songs and repetitive rhymes. Staff use their knowledge of children's interests to develop their speech and language, continuously introducing new words into their vocabulary. However, some children, who are less confident to vocalise their needs, do not have the same effective support and interactions from staff. This results in some children not having as much confidence to join in activities and play of their choice.
- Staff understand how to promote all the areas of learning equally through a range of experiences. For example, older children explore movement and balance in the woodland area using hammocks and yoga poses. Younger children investigate sensory experiences with herbs and scented tea bags. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have access to equipment with positive interactions. This helps to support their particular learning and preferences in play.
- Parents receive regular communication from staff and management. They feel reassured that their children are safe within the setting. Parents use weekly emails, newsletters, online information and verbal feedback from their keyperson to help support children's development at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff use an effective programme of information, displays, training and support to understand and follow procedures correctly to help protect children from harm. Staff are confident in their knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. Children learn to keep themselves safe. For example, staff encourage walking babies and toddlers to hold on to the door frame when stepping outside to steady themselves. Older children listen and understand the rules of the woodland play area. They know the size of sticks they can play with and the areas that they can explore.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to understand how to enable less confident children to communicate what they would like to do next.

Setting details

Unique reference number	140897
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10301616
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 at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	130
Number of children on roll	243
Name of registered person	Childbase Partnership Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900830
Telephone number	01296 432004
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

Willows Day Nursery registered in 1994 and is located in the grounds of Stoke Mandeville Hospital, in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. The nursery is open each weekday, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, throughout the year. The nursery is in receipt of funding for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs 60 staff. The manager and 37 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Claire Parnell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- Senior managers joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing while at the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- 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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