

Inspection of Willow Cottage Nursery (Bletchington)

Willow Cottage Nursery, The Old School, Weston Road, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 3DH

Inspection date: 17 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy and are greeted warmly by the welcoming staff. Staff show genuine interest in the children and their families and form strong bonds with them. Experienced staff create a calm, cosy and homely environment, which children adore. Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum for all children. This is based on the secure knowledge of children's current skills and interests and takes account of what they want children to learn next.

Staff regularly introduce new language and resources to extend and build on children's previous learning. For example, older children are curious to learn about different birds in winter. Furthermore, they are excited to observe a 'red kite' fly into the neighbouring field. Children learn how to use all their senses to understand the properties of different materials and objects. For instance, younger children become deeply engaged in their play as they scoop, pour and transfer sand, water and coloured oats to different containers. Children make good progress and demonstrate an eagerness to explore and learn more.

Staff reflect a positive and respectful culture and have high expectations for children's behaviour. As a result, children demonstrate very good levels of self-confidence and self-esteem and behave impeccably well. Children display exceptionally positive and mature behaviours. They are motivated to explore and play extremely well together. Staff sensitively support and promote children's emotional security, resilience, independence and development. Children thrive in their nurturing environment. They build very strong emotional bonds with their key person.

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

- Leaders are passionate and committed to the continuous improvement of the nursery. They have an accurate view of the setting. The supportive management team provides good opportunities for staff training and support. For example, training recently completed has helped the team to further support and monitor children's language and communication skills. As a result, this training is making a positive difference to the progress children make in this area.
- Children are curious about the world around them and relish the opportunities to be outside. This supports them in learning new skills and vocabulary. For instance, children use binoculars to observe nature; they enjoy painting and compare quantities as they fill and empty various containers in the water tray. Much laughter and giggles can be heard from a group of children as they build dens in the garden with their friends. Children learn the necessary skills they need to be ready for school, such as taking turns, sharing, independence and listening to instructions.

- Staff encourage children constantly to be increasingly independent. For example, young children have plenty of opportunities to negotiate steps and equipment. Older children develop confidence in using various tools in their play, such as pipettes, spanners and screwdrivers. This helps to develop the muscles in their hands needed to hold and control a pencil successfully.
- Overall, staff support children's communication and language skills well. Children are provided with a language-rich environment. Staff use various opportunities to extend children's vocabulary. For example, they ask questions to encourage children to think and talk about their play. However, during some group activities, while the more confident children voice their ideas and knowledge, staff do not always consider how to encourage those who are quieter and less confident to talk and express themselves.
- Staff gather relevant information from parents when children first start about what they already know and can do. Staff use this information, alongside their own observations and assessment, to plan interesting and challenging activities. Key persons know their children well. They spend quality time with them to establish strong relationships and help them to feel safe and secure.
- Partnership with parents is a real strength of the nursery. Staff share photos and regular information about children's progress via an online app and verbal discussions. Parents comment that they are 'immensely impressed' and that staff are 'highly professional and committed, and children get the best start in life'.
- The management team is proactive in monitoring staff practice. Managers work alongside staff and model practice effectively. Leaders meet with staff regularly to discuss their well-being and the progress that individual children are making. This all helps to raise the quality of care and learning. Staff say they feel fully supported. They are given opportunities to enhance their existing skills and knowledge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance opportunities for children who are less confident in speaking to talk and express themselves.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY499912
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10326417
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	083
Name of registered person	Willow Cottage Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP529247
Telephone number	01869 251358
Date of previous inspection	29 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

Willow Cottage Nursery (Bletchingdon) registered in 2016 as a private limited company. The nursery is situated at The Old School, in Bletchingdon, Oxfordshire. It is one of three privately owned nurseries located in Oxfordshire. The nursery operates weekdays, from 7.40am until 5.45pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery receives funding to provide early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs 26 staff, 21 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications between level 2 and level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anneliese Fox-Jones

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken this into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed activities in the three main base rooms and garden. She talked to staff about the progress individual children are making and what they want the children to learn.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk across all areas of the nursery to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- A joint observation was carried out by the inspector and the manager. The inspector observed interactions between staff and the children and evaluated the impact these have on children's learning.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation, including evidence of paediatric first-aid training. The inspector had a discussion with leaders about the evaluation of the setting and plans for improvement.

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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