

Inspection of The Willow Set Preschool

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

Inspection date: 1 August 2024

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are warmly welcomed by happy, caring staff who are attentive and pleased to see children as they arrive. The setting plans a curriculum based on the areas of learning, children's interests and seasonal themes. However, the curriculum is not effectively implemented, as staff's engagement and interactions with children are too variable. While the staff know their children, they are not clear about what they want children to learn next and do not implement a curriculum that is fully focused on children's individual needs. Children are not always sufficiently challenged to extend their learning and build on what they already know. For example, staff do not consider potential learning opportunities or provide appropriate resources to broaden children's learning or challenge their thinking.

Despite this, children settle quickly and are keen and eager to have a go at the activities provided. They relish their time in the garden. Children have established close bonds with the staff, who offer them cuddles and reassurance when needed. Staff treat children with respect. They encourage and praise children throughout the day. Staff help children to develop positive relationships with one another. They recognise when children need help to manage their emotions and act swiftly to offer support. This means children can start their day feeling secure.

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

- Staff monitor children's learning and identify what they need to learn next. However, they do not use this information well enough to ensure they implement the curriculum in a way that consistently and successfully builds on what each child already knows and what they can do. In addition, there are regular times during the day when staff are preoccupied completing daily tasks such as cleaning and tidying away the resources. This diverts their attention away from the children and therefore reduces learning opportunities during these times. Consequently, some children quickly lose focus or spend periods of time disengaged from learning.
- The implementation of the curriculum for communication and language is not helping children to make the progress they are capable of. Some staff are not supporting children who are already confident communicators to build their vocabulary and their conversation skills because they are not interacting with children often enough. When they do interact, they do not do enough to introduce children to new words and help them understand their meaning.
- Overall, children behave well. For instance, children know the routines, as they are embedded, and follow them well. This helps children develop an understanding of what is expected of them. However, due to inconsistencies in the curriculum, some children do not have positive attitudes to learning and

struggle to concentrate. This has an impact on some children's motivation and engagement to learn new knowledge and skills.

- Children have opportunities to learn about the community they live in. For example, they visit the local allotment, where they explore the different vegetables and flowers. However, staff do not do enough at these times to ignite children's curiosity and to offer them challenge, and this limits their learning.
- Staff encourage children to build their own independence and self-help skills. Toddlers are encouraged to make their own choices during snack times and older children wash their hands and use the toilet independently.
- All children enjoy daily outdoor play. There are lots of opportunities for them to be physically active. Children delight in using the climbing frame and ride-along toys. Staff closely supervise to ensure that children remain safe when taking appropriate risks. As a result, children are building their large muscles and confidence.
- Parents speak positively of the nursery. They say their children are happy and enjoying attending. Parents say they are well informed and verbal handovers are thorough and advise them of their child's day.

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 meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
implement an ambitious curriculum to ensure all children make good progress in all areas of their learning and development	27/09/2024
improve staff's interactions with children so that children gain the most from the curriculum and receive good support for the development of their communication and language skills.	27/09/2024

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY431515
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10357551
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	2 to 13
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	116
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	24 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

The Willow Set Preschool 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 for 50 weeks of the year. The Sun up/Sun down club is open from 7.30am to 9am and from 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. Seven staff are qualified at level 3 or above. One has a level 2 qualification and one member of staff is unqualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marie Swindells

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.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 manager and inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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