

Little Willows Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 200674
Inspection date 06/05/2009
Inspector David Shepherd

Setting address Whitnash Primary School, Langley Road, Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire, CV31 2EX
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Little Willows Pre-School opened in 1998. It operates from two open-plan rooms and an office in a building adjoining Whitnash Primary School. It uses the toilets in the reception class area of the school and has occasional use of the school hall. The outside area is large, partly covered and fenced off. Disabled access is through the main door. The pre-school is situated in the residential area of Whitnash, Leamington Spa.

A maximum of 34 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It opens on week days during school term times. Sessions run from 09:00 to 11:30 and from 12:30 to 15:00. There are currently 81 children aged from two- to five-years-old on roll, all of whom are of Early Years Foundation Stage age. Of these, 70 children receive funding for early education. Children generally come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. Seven staff members and the manager work with the children, two of whom are part-time. All staff hold appropriate qualifications.

Good links are maintained with the school. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Little Willows Pre-School is outstanding in meeting the welfare and learning development needs of all children. Relationships between staff and children are excellent and children respond readily to what they are asked to do. A wide variety of interesting activities is provided for the children that reflect all aspects of Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Links with parents are excellent. The manager and staff continually review their practice and have a very good capacity to improve provision further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improve the safeguarding of children by making the kitchen facilities inaccessible to children

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and staff have developed outstanding policies and established procedures that ensure the safe and efficient management of Early Years Foundation Stage provision. The needs of all children are met. Children are supervised by well-qualified practitioners. Five staff hold a Level 3 qualification,

one an NNEB qualification, one a Level 2 qualification and one is training for a Level 2. Four staff are trained in first aid. An administrator also supports the pre-school. All staff are CRB checked.

In order to maintain the outstanding progress made by the children, staff meet each day at lunchtimes to discuss how well the children are responding to what is provided for them. They share their expertise and thorough knowledge of the children on these occasions and continually seek to improve provision further. These sessions are very well led and are a valuable and very effective means of building outstanding provision both inside and outside. The overall quality of self-evaluation indicates that the capacity to make improvements is very good.

Staff are deployed extremely well. Each acts as a key worker for small groups of children. Key workers know their children very well. All are involved in evaluating the progress of children in their group. They assess accurately and record in detail the progress made across the six areas of learning. In order to ensure children continue to make great strides in their learning and development, staff discuss children's progress with the school when the children transfer to the reception class.

Staff ensure that the children are safe. The premises are secure and risk assessments are carried out for different types of activity, for example, visits to places of interest such as Oakley Wood and Umberslade Farm as well as activities that take place within the pre-school. At present children could easily enter the kitchen area. Despite this, children are closely supervised at all times, for example, when going to the toilet in the reception class area. All children are included in activities and are encouraged to do so by staff who keep a watchful eye on what each child is doing. The needs of all children, including those with additional educational needs, are met extremely well.

Links with parents are highly effective. They receive copies of all policies and procedures in a comprehensive booklet. Parents also have access to staff planning in all six areas of learning. This is pinned on the parents' notice board for parents to read when they drop off or collect their children. They are kept informed of the range of activities that take place in the planning, although this is not yet in timetable form. The admission form provides all the necessary information, including parental permission for seeking medical treatment.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children in the pre-school are developing very good social habits. They really enjoy playing with toys, equipment and materials, behave exceptionally well and respond most eagerly when asked to carry out activities. They help to tidy up after playing with toys, walk around the classroom sensibly and consider other children and adults when they are carrying out their activities. They play extremely well together, for instance, in the outside area, during sand play and when remembering under which cups the teddies are placed. All this encourages them to be very good early learners and helps them make a successful transfer to the next stage in their schooling.

Staff look after the welfare needs of children excellently. Strong emphasis is placed on children washing their hands after going to the toilet and before having a snack. Children eat their healthy fruit and vegetable snacks very sensibly and listen to stories intently. They have free access to drinking water at any time and also drink milk during their snack, which they really enjoy.

The learning environment is very stimulating, interesting and varied. Children are engaged in a variety of very well-planned activities such as building with blocks, playing with building bricks and other small toys, following stories, spray painting, role play, following numbers to 10 and playing on a computer. Of particular note during the inspection was the opportunity for children to stroke the one-week-old chicks that had just been hatched in an incubator. Children were excited at this experience, some giggling as they described what the newly forming fluff and feathers felt like. Children benefit immensely from playing with outside activities that include digging and planting in the garden area, and painting and role play in the green ship. Staff change the range and number of activities prepared each day as a result of their very effective lunchtime evaluation meetings.

The balance and range of inside and outside activities is outstanding because the needs of each individual child are planned for very carefully. Outside activities take place each session. Whilst the older children can choose to go outside whenever they wish, staff ensure that the younger ones play outside in turns to make sure they feel safe, well looked after and carefully supervised. Children have excellent opportunities to choose their own activities, which are overseen by staff who make very timely interventions to capitalise on the children's learning. At other times, children are directed by staff and they carry out tasks together, for instance when they play games in a group, observe the chicks or listen to a story. Because each session has a very well planned range of different activities, children are really interested and involved in what is on offer.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 1 |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice? | 1 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement. | 1 |

Leadership and management

| | |
|---|---|
| How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed? | 1 |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | 1 |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others? | 1 |
| How well are children safeguarded? | 2 |

Quality and standards

| | |
|---|---|
| How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop? | 1 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted? | 1 |
| How well are children helped to stay safe? | 1 |
| How well are children helped to be healthy? | 1 |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve? | 1 |
| How well are children helped to make a positive contribution? | 1 |
| How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 1 |

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