

Little Willows Pre-School

Whitnash Primary School, Langley Road, LEAMINGTON SPA, Warwickshire, CV31 2EX

Inspection date	20/06/2014
Previous inspection date	06/05/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Teaching is good because staff plan challenging activities for children based on their interests. Children are well-motivated by staff's encouragement and praise for their efforts and achievements and as a result, they are confident and want to do well.
- The manager and lead practitioner are rigorous in overseeing the system for assessment. This means that comprehensive and accurate observations are made and shared about children's attainment and progress.
- Children are safe because staff provide good supervision during their activities. Staff understand the importance of following the correct procedures in the event of any child protection concerns.
- Partnerships with parents, other professionals, social services and in particular with the adjoining primary school, are a key strength of the pre-school. Children's learning is enhanced as a result, in consistent and complementary ways.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always interact sufficiently with children during snack times to practise the use of appropriate mealtime vocabulary and their social skills.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held discussions with the registered person, the manager, the senior practitioner and staff and interacted with children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector toured the premises and observed activities throughout the pre-school in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- The inspector conducted joint observations with the senior practitioner of planned activities with groups of children.
- The inspector examined a sample of documentation, including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures, including the pre-school's plans for improvement.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and of the headteacher of the adjoining primary school acquired through discussion.

Inspector

Deirdre Lyddy

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Willows Pre-School is run by a committee and opened in 1998. It is situated in the residential area of Whitnash, Leamington Spa. It operates from two rooms in a building adjoining Whitnash Primary School. There is also an office and a kitchen area. Children have access to the toilets in the reception class area of the adjoining primary school. It has occasional use of the school hall and an outdoor area. The pre-school opens on week days during school term times. Sessions run from 8.30am to 11.30am and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. There are 80 children on roll in the early years age range. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and supports children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds Qualified Teacher Status; one holds an early years qualification at level 5, three at level 3 and four at level 2. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance opportunities for children to practise their social skills, for example, by staff encouraging them to use good manners, take turns and listen to others during mealtimes.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a good knowledge of children, their interests and families prior to their enrolment. They collect good information from parents by visiting children's homes and organise 'stay and play' sessions when families are actively encouraged to take part in various activities with children. So that parents can become familiar with the pre-school and know how to help their children, staff also organise workshops. Staff make regular observations of children and track and record their progress meticulously. When parents collect their children, a staff member is assigned to meet with them to ensure the pre-school is updated regularly by parents on children's interests and home activities. Parents also receive regular newsletters on the activities taking place in the pre-school. They are effectively supported to become involved in their child's learning so they can carry on the learning at home. Staff support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in their learning very well. They meet regularly with other professionals, share their own observations and agree on the next steps in order to further the learning. As a result, they are making good progress towards the early learning goals, given their starting points.

Staff have given much thought to the layout and use of the indoor and outdoor space.

They provide a variety of very good quality play materials and set them out carefully for children to explore. Staff skilfully encourage children to try new activities and to judge risks for themselves. For example, children show good control and coordination, when exploring a climbing frame with confidence. Then they realise that they must work out how to safely return to the ground from a height. Staff are quick to recognise that this is an opportunity for children to solve their own problems and encourage them to think in advance how they will accomplish a task by asking 'what is the safest way to get down?' Children's success is praised by staff who tell them 'well done, you worked it out!' and this encourages them to try things for themselves.

Teaching is good because there is a sharp focus on enabling children to acquire the language skills and mathematical language needed in preparation for school. Children ride wheeled toys and staff help them to travel around a large chalk circle drawn on the ground, while children chant 'round and round'. Staff occasionally join with children in their play. For example, they become involved with a group, which is 'travelling to the shops' on wheeled toys and by taking this opportunity to develop children's thinking skills. Staff ask good questions, such as 'what shall we buy?' and 'how much money will we need?' Children talk about the price of fruit and use their counting skills to estimate how much money they will need to buy a banana. Children have opportunities to experiment with quantities and measures and to practise their manipulative skills by filling and emptying many different containers in the sand play area. They find out how the sand can change shape in a saucepan or beaker when using it as an ingredient for 'cooking' in the play kitchen. Staff talk to children as they 'cook' and as a result, model the use of mathematical language, such as, 'big', 'small', 'hot' and 'cold'. Staff help children to notice how wet paper changes when it dries in the hot sun and use good questioning to enable children to wonder where the water goes. Children enjoy browsing through books placed in attractive story chests. As a result, children acquire an enthusiasm and motivation for learning, which prepares them well for school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The highly successful key-person system and settling-in procedures, which include visits by staff members to children's homes, ensure children are happy, relaxed and settle quickly into the pre-school. To help children who speak English as an additional language to become familiar with the activities, the pre-school welcomes family members who can assist with translation. In addition, they gather key words in order to support children further. Staff carefully provide resources for role play, which reflect children's family lives and communities. Day-to-day routines are fully embedded and occur in a predictable sequence of events, which helps children to feel secure. For example, children attend the neighbouring primary school's assembly for a short period once a week. They confidently move as a group through the primary school classrooms. Pre-school children are also presented with awards for aspects of learning, such as 'sharing' and 'contributing ideas' during the assembly. Key persons talk to children about their feelings as they return. This means that children are exceptionally well prepared emotionally for the eventual transition to primary school.

Relationships between children and staff members are strong. Staff routinely praise children's efforts, which helps to promote their self-esteem. They use two toy bears as puppets. The bears 'select' children, who will take them home for the weekend for specific effort made, such as helping a friend. If children forget when this occurred, staff remind them about the events of the past week by showing them photographs. This means that they involve all children in caring for each other. Children are very confident and willingly work together to invent new games, such as using a microphone and an accompanying keyboard to create a singing performance. Several children agree together on the rules for a game, which involves a sequence of counting to 20, jumping on a platform and running in a circle. Children in the outdoor area collaborate to set up pieces of wood as a makeshift counter for a 'takeaway' and rapidly organise themselves as proprietor and customers.

Children's good health and their understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle are well promoted. This is because they can run and play outside and benefit from fresh air on a daily basis. Children tidy up the toys they are using and return them independently to allocated shelves showing good self-management skills. Children develop good self-care skills. Staff help them to learn about keeping safe. For example, they remind them to wear hats to protect themselves from the sun in hot weather. Children are aware of the importance of following good hygiene practices and are becoming competent in managing their personal needs, relative to their ages. For example, they are learning to wash their hands before eating their snacks and lunches. They say whether they prefer jam or butter and can spread these independently on toast using knives. Children chat easily to each other during snack time. However there is scope for staff to interact further with children during these snack periods and to practise the use of appropriate mealtime vocabulary and social skills.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and staff have a good understanding and knowledge of how to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Arrangements for safeguarding children within the pre-school and outdoor play areas are good. Thorough recruitment and vetting procedures undertaken by management ensure that staff are suitable and safe to work with children. A broad range of safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented to ensure that children are well-protected. All staff have regular training on safeguarding issues and they can readily describe the procedures they would follow in the case of having concerns about children's welfare. Ratios are carefully maintained and staff are deployed well to ensure that children are well-supervised, both indoors and outdoors. Children are protected as a result of practical measures taken to identify and minimise elements of risk both within the pre-school and on outings.

The manager and the senior practitioner collaborate very well with each other to ensure that the pre-school is well led and managed. Both are highly influenced by the Reggio Emilio approach to early years education. They both monitor weekly planning to ensure

that there is breadth and depth in the educational programmes conducted. They ensure that the curriculum has challenge and reflects the needs and interests of children. The senior practitioner frequently monitors and evaluates teaching. Action points arising are channelled into the identification of training priorities. Ongoing support and training undertaken within the pre-school ensure that staff are clear about policies and procedures. The impact of ideas acquired during external training is seen in the creative use of recycling materials, which helps children to learn about caring for the environment. Twice-weekly team meetings effectively support staff well in their work with children. The manager and the senior practitioner both undertake very thorough scrutiny of learning journals to ensure that assessment is rigorous and judgements made by members of staff are accurate. The senior practitioner undertakes supervisory meetings on a half-termly basis and appraisals annually. Staff are set targets for improvement and subsequent actions undertaken are systematically recorded.

Members of staff are given individual responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the areas of learning, which ensures that their designated sections present challenge and reflect the interests of children. This team approach to considering and evaluating the quality of the learning environment, ensures continuous improvement of the pre-school. The partnerships, which have been developed with parents, other professionals and social services are a key strength of the pre-school. Every effort is made to enhance children's learning and development in consistent and complementary ways. Children with special education needs and/or disabilities are particularly well-supported because the comprehensive information collected about children's progress is shared with other professionals. Parents met were very complimentary about the approachable staff, who make every effort to keep them informed about their children's progress. The successful partnerships developed with primary schools and in particular, with the primary school adjoining the pre-school, are very beneficial in ensuring that children are very well-prepared for their next stages in learning.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	200674
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	854270
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	80
Name of provider	Little Willows Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	06/05/2009
Telephone number	01926 425225

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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