

Inspection of Willow Tree Pre School

The Green, Deanshanger, MILTON KEYNES MK19 6HJ

Inspection date: 28 February 2024

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 happy and engaged at the safe and welcoming pre-school. They settle quickly, seeking out reassurance from warm, kind staff. Children develop strong bonds, which helps them to develop their sense of well-being and belonging.

Children's physical skills are supported well by staff. For example, while benefiting from fresh air in the garden, children are encouraged to scramble up steps and push themselves down the slide. They control their movements as they push the pedals on tricycles to make them move. This helps children to build their co-ordination and balancing skills. Staff constantly praise and encourage children by saying, 'well done, you're doing really well.' Children smile widely as they are praised, and continue to repeat their actions.

Staff are skilful at helping children to take responsibility of their pre-school. For example, children put toys away when asked. They help to tidy and wash up plates and cups after snack. This helps children to take pride in their environment. Children demonstrate good manners as they as they enjoy the activities available to them, sharing and playing co-operatively with their peers. Staff act as role models, encouraging children to say 'please' and 'thank you' during the day.

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

- The manager and her staff team carefully reflect on their practice. They have assessed and improved their environment to meet the needs of the children present. For example, they have considered how to provide safe and comfortable areas for children to rest and sleep. This has helped younger children to enjoy a full day at pre-school, and gain the rest they require to remain active and focused throughout the day.
- The manager and her staff plan and organise the curriculum well. They have carefully considered the recent arrival of two-year-olds to the setting. Staff place emphasis on providing a curriculum that puts all children's emotional well-being to the forefront. They have ensured that a strong key-person system helps children to build bonds and settle quickly. Children are happy and enjoy being part of the pre-school.
- The manager monitors staff practice through regular observations. However, this monitoring is not as effective as it could be. For example, on some occasions staff do not challenge children more to enhance their learning. Whilst children are looking at a bee found in the garden, building on what the children already know and can do is not challenged and extended as well as it could be. This means that children are not always helped to make rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Parents speak very highly of the 'nurturing and child focused' pre-school. They

comment that regular updates on their child's progress allows them to understand how to help their children to learn at home. They say the 'great learning environment' within pre-school helps to ignite a love of learning.

- Staff focus on developing children's independence and social skills throughout the day. For example, all children are encouraged to put their own coats and boots on before outdoor play. Children pour their own drinks and use safety knives to carefully cut their bananas for snack, exclaiming, 'I can chop it.' They build their confidence and social skills as they sit and talk to their friends during mealtimes.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Partnership working is effective in providing swift support for those who require additional help. Staff work closely with outside professionals to help children make good progress. Staff say how additional training has helped them and given them confidence in their role of supporting children with SEND.
- Children access a wide range of books at pre-school. Staff create photo books of the children's family members. They skilfully help children to build their language skills as they encourage all children to talk about the family members they see in the photos. Children show pride and share these books with visitors, talking about their family.

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:

- strengthen the feedback and quality of monitoring on staff practice to enhance the quality of education.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY413991
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10311962
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Willow Tree Pre-School (Milton Keynes) Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904840
Telephone number	01908 571252
Date of previous inspection	17 April 2018

Information about this early years setting

Willow Tree Pre School registered in 2010 and is situated in the village of Deanshanger, Northamptonshire. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff, of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, and one holds an early years qualification at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time from 8.15am until 3.15pm. They provide funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Stephanie North

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 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 carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents and grandparents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- 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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