

Two Willows Early Years Centre & Community Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	512405
Inspection date	21 September 2007
Inspector	Paula Fretwell
Setting Address	Cardinal Square, Beeston, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS11 8HF
Telephone number	0113 2706166
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Registered person	Leeds City Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Two Willows Children's Centre is provided by Leeds City Council and has been open since 1991. It provides care and services for children and their families and operates from a single storey building, which also serves the local community, in the Beeston area of Leeds. Children attend from the local and wider areas.

There are 77 children on roll, this includes 33 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language.

The provision opens five days a week throughout the year, from 08.00 to 18.00, excluding bank holidays.

There are 20 staff who work with the children and have recognised early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health is given utmost priority at all times throughout the setting. Highly effective procedures and practices fully support the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Excellent opportunities enable children to learn and understand about healthy living. Children's personal hygiene is managed exceptionally well and they are learning to take good care of themselves and their growing bodies. Outstanding priority is given to promoting the care of children's teeth through a healthy diet, close links with parents and effective teeth cleaning. Children have individual toothbrushes for their own use and they enjoy cleaning their teeth after meals, with practitioners joining in to clean their own teeth and set a good example. Children's independence is increasing as they become competent in their personal care; they wash and dry their hands and understand why good hygiene is an important part of their routine. Older children can explain about 'germs that might make you poorly' and posters at children's eye level illustrate how children can contribute to the very high standards of hygiene practised throughout.

Practitioners know the children exceptionally well and they are alert to any changes in their well-being. Babies' emotional needs are extremely well promoted through close and consistent relationships with their key person, who sensitively manages their individual care and communicates effectively with parents. Babies are made to feel special and they quickly develop a sense of belonging and self assurance. Strong emphasis is placed upon meeting children's individual, unique needs and this is the starting point for all aspects of their care.

Children gain an excellent understanding of healthy eating and how this links to healthy living. They are very well nourished; they grow, prepare and eat fresh, nutritious food and they learn to understand what is good for them. Children enjoy a wide variety of healthy snacks and drinks throughout the day and they are fully informed about the food they eat. For example, older children know which parts of their snacks are fruit and which are vegetables. Children are involved in making 'fruit smoothies' and enthusiastically drink what they have produced, talking excitedly about the healthy contents of their drink. Very young children have drinks constantly available and they help themselves to water, skilfully recognising their own photograph tag on their cup, or thoughtfully passing a recognised cup to their peers. Older children competently use water dispensers and demonstrate how these work, or help themselves to their own milk from the fridge within their base room. Children explain that 'drinking milk makes your teeth keep nice and white and strong'. Meals are carefully prepared with full consideration and thoughtful adaptation for the needs of all ages of children. Meal times are wonderful experiences for all of the children. Babies and the youngest children enjoy close contact with their own special carer who understands their individual needs. They experience a relaxed and calm environment with sufficient support to enable them to enjoy their food and grow in independence. Babies are lovingly held whilst bottle feeding and they enjoy plenty of cuddles, smiley eye contact and reassurance. Mealtimes for older children are delightful occasions with a family atmosphere. Children display impeccable table manners as they wait for everyone to be served before eating their food. Children chat together as they eat and they enjoy serving themselves, making informed healthy choices with gentle guidance from practitioners. Children know the benefits of healthy eating and confidently state 'eating this dinner gives us lots of energy to run round outside'. Practitioners skilfully maximise all possible opportunities at mealtimes to incorporate children's learning in all six areas.

Children make excellent progress in their physical development through a superb range of activities. The exciting, stimulating outdoor provision enables children to enjoy a wealth of experiences through all of their senses. Children vigorously engage in outdoor play and relish the opportunities it provides. They enthusiastically explore and discover new and exciting things whatever the weather. Rainy weather enhances opportunities for children's play as they splash in puddles, put up umbrellas and watch how the rain behaves when it lands on different surfaces. Practitioners extend children's learning by putting silver foil on an outdoor surface, and then onto children's umbrellas to amplify the sound of the raindrops. Children show awe and wonder as they discover tiny creatures and they look for places to make them a home, such as in the long grass. Indoor movement areas enable children to practise rolling, stretching and moving around and they have fun using large body movements in their play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The inviting child-centred environment is extremely attractive to all of the families who use the setting. The safe, welcoming atmosphere is immediately embracing and inspires a instant sense of belonging and calm. Background music, bright interactive displays and friendly greetings from adults and special teddy bears encourage children to enter the setting with confidence and vigour. The warmth and enthusiasm of all adults in the setting is contagious to the children and they quickly settle to enjoy their day.

Children's safety and security is paramount. Children enjoy the freedom to discover, play and take risks within safe limits, whilst learning how to keep themselves safe with gentle guidance from practitioners. Children enjoy selecting their own resources for play and they engage in self-chosen challenges from an excellent range of high quality toys and equipment. They enjoy a very good mix of man-made and natural resources which are appropriate to their interests and easily accessible to them. Children play safely in all areas of the setting. Their care rooms are attractively set out to enable them to play and explore, the outside play space is inspiring and imaginative and the sensory room is an exciting corner of the setting which stimulates all of their senses. Practitioners are highly skilled, observant of children and aware of potential hazards so that they effectively promote children's safety throughout the setting. Staff are extremely vigilant about children's security, ensuring that only authorised adults may collect children and the areas around the premises are securely monitored at all times. Access to the children's care rooms is strictly controlled and monitored through the effective use of an intercom system and secure internal doors. Emergency procedures are practised regularly to develop children's understanding of safety, such as in the event of a fire.

All practitioners fully understand the importance of safeguarding children and they are thoroughly committed and clear about their roles and responsibilities. All staff have instant access to the child protection policy and procedure and they are knowledgeable about what to do in the event of a concern or allegation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All children relish their time in the setting. They enjoy excellent relationships with practitioners who are warm, responsive and attentive to their needs. Children are secure in the consistency of their own key person who gives full priority to their well-being and development, with many opportunities for one to one interaction, conversation and cuddles appropriate to each child's

needs. Practitioners are well trained and informed about children's needs, ensuring they have enjoyable, stimulating activities and experiences. A flexible and child-centred approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. Staff are keenly aware of how individual children learn and skilfully adapt activities to build on children's interests.

Care for babies is exemplary. Practitioners gain information from parents and then follow babies' interests, allowing them to explore and observing them in their play. Babies' communication is encouraged through practitioners echoing their sounds and words and effectively responding to what babies show they want to do. Babies' non-verbal language is skilfully interpreted and practitioners provide what they need by following their cues. For example, babies show they are tired and practitioners respond promptly to settle them for sleep, babies reach up for an attractive mobile and practitioners bring it within their reach to let them explore the sounds it makes. Babies enjoy attractive and stimulating activities with innovative use of resources. They are excited by new textures and they become thoroughly absorbed in their play, such as when moving their fingers through shaving foam or sticky marshmallow. Practitioners are aware of babies' pace of learning and they allow them sufficient time to make their own connections.

Children who are two-years-old enjoy first hand experiences and practitioners facilitate their learning through play and discovery. Practitioners expertly know what two-year-olds need and they enable children to build upon their natural curiosity as learners, joining in to enhance their play where appropriate. Exciting activities match the children's keen enthusiasm and concentration levels. For example, they excitedly look at a book about dinosaurs with practitioners and then compare the dinosaur teeth to their own. Children are fascinated as they watch the effects of blowing a feather in the air and practitioners enable them to repeat this experience over and over again. Children enjoy tactile experiences as they experiment with corn-flour; they hide their hands in it and squeal with delight, then hold up their hands and say 'drip, drip'. Practitioners use open questioning with the children and ask 'what does it feel like?' and offer new words to describe, which children repeat. Children are developing in confidence and independence and they know their key worker is there to support them. Their care needs are fully met. For example, when they are tired they enjoy snuggling up in their cosy corner and the calm, relaxing environment promotes their rest. They confidently say 'night night, sweet dreams' and they enjoy this quiet time before joining in to play again with new energy.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Practitioners create a secure atmosphere where children can develop good attitudes and dispositions to learning. Children's learning and achievements are exceptional in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Highly skilled practitioners effectively promote children's learning so that they are making outstanding progress towards the early learning goals in all areas, with excellent emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development. There are clear links between observation, assessment and planning. Regular observations of children's learning informs the planning. Activities are carefully planned and based firmly upon the interests of the children and practitioners have a clear understanding of each child's stage of development and what they need to do next to make further progress.

Children engage in self-chosen challenges and they are extremely confident and self-assured, working and playing effectively on their own or with others. Relationships with their peers and with adults are excellent. Children negotiate with others when playing together and take

responsibility for their actions. They are extremely independent and autonomous within the routine and they need little support from practitioners in their own self-care. For example, they help themselves to drinks and snacks, manage their own personal hygiene and organise the things they need for play, such as an apron for playing in the water. They have an excellent awareness of right and wrong in line with their stage of development and they remind each other of simple rules, such as taking shoes off to use the sensory room. Children show concern for others. For example, they bring a chair for adults to sit down, they offer to share their umbrella when it is raining and they stroke their friend's hair asking 'are you tired?'. Children gain a well-developed respect for others and their beliefs, cultures and traditions through planned and spontaneous activities and discussion.

Opportunities for children's communication, language and literacy are superb. They are confident and capable communicators, using speech to describe real and imagined experiences. Children's vocabulary is increasing and this is skilfully enhanced by practitioners at every opportunity. For example, children play with sea creatures in the water tray and the practitioner introduces the names of shark, whale and dolphin. The environment is rich in print and children see a range of different texts in familiar and different languages. The book corner is inviting to children and they freely select books to look at. Children snuggle up with empathy dolls to read them a story, pointing out the book title and author and turning the pages, animatedly talking about each page from memory and telling the story with expression. Children enjoy home made books, such as 'granddad's adventures' in which practitioners create a story based around a classroom character doll, with photograph illustrations. Children enthusiastically listen to stories read to them and practitioners involve them to maintain their concentration and interest. Children delight in using the office area, selecting their own documents to complete and create, such as birthday cards and party invitations for their friends. They have good pencil control and form recognisable letters, effectively using all mark-making resources within their play areas and attempting to write for a purpose.

Children's mathematical development is excellent. They have vast opportunities to count and practitioners ensure practical, everyday activities are used effectively, enabling children to begin to use their knowledge of numbers to solve simple mathematical problems. For example children work out how many more bowls they will need for the number of children at the lunch table and add one more if required. Children know that numbers have meaning, such as when discussing their ages and birthdays. For example, they make a cake out of play dough and put four candles on for their next birthday. They say 'I'm three, my brother is two and my daddy is loads!' Children can identify numerals in the environment, such as on their office clock. They have an excellent awareness of shape, space and size and they use mathematical language in their play. For example, they design and build a house out of large construction bricks and they know they need 'lots of big rectangles' for the walls. Children talk about 'full' and 'empty' as they pour water into containers in the water play.

Children are curious and keen to know about the world around them. Practitioners effectively help the children become more aware of the environment and the natural world. Children freely explore the outdoor areas using all their senses and they enjoy investigating the outside environment, particularly in the wild garden area where they discover what creatures are hiding in the grass. Children are enthusiastic gardeners and they enjoy planting and growing fruit, vegetables and plants. For example, they put on their gardening gloves and fill up pots with compost, proudly explaining how they 'have planted bulbs which will soon make flowers'. Children are knowledgeable about what plants need to make them grow and they demonstrate how they water and take care of their rhubarb plants. Children demonstrate excellent skills in the use of everyday technology; they competently use the computer in a wide range of

challenging activities and can name the component parts, such as 'mouse' and 'keyboard'. Children help to operate the blender as they make fruit drinks and they know how the compact disc player works. Children are developing a clear sense of time, past, present and future. They talk about familiar events, their families and themselves. For example, children say things like 'my brother is going on an aeroplane', 'my mummy has got a big tummy because there's a baby in there' and 'I've been to grandma's'. Children talk enthusiastically about the schools they will go to when they are big enough to leave the setting.

Children's creativity is encouraged and they use many opportunities to engage in imaginary play. They dress up and act out familiar domestic roles, with plenty of time to play uninterrupted. Children enthusiastically select their own resources from within the workshop area and they know where to find what they need to support their play and ideas. Children thoroughly enjoy music and they dance spontaneously or sing made up songs and those from memory. They are learning to appreciate a wide range of music from many different cultures and with many different styles. Children make their own music from imaginative resources indoors and outside and they know the names of many instruments. Children have a very good understanding of colours and some children identify shades of colours. Children appreciate beautiful things in their environment; they enjoy flowers on their lunch tables and they talk about their colourful plants growing outside.

Children practise and refine their physical skills through excellent opportunities for them to choose their own challenges in what they would like to play with. They have increasing control and co-ordination as they use small equipment, such as pencils, cutlery, scissors and clothes fastenings. Children concentrate hard as they weave ribbons on a trellis. Large body movements are practised using an excellent range of equipment and children can balance, pedal, run, jump and hop, changing speed or direction as required. Children thoroughly enjoy parachute games and they giggle as they raise their arms to help move the colourful parachute high in the air.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are firmly valued and welcomed in an inclusive environment in which every child matters. Children are consulted and they contribute to decisions about all aspects of their care. Practitioners ensure the environment reflects the world that children live in and there are excellent positive images on display throughout the building, including many lovely photographs of the children themselves. Very young children point to familiar photographs displayed at their eye level of family members, helping them to feel valued and special. Individual children are affirmed and acknowledged by name and practitioners use excellent eye contact, facial expressions and positive body language when communicating with them. Practitioners encourage children to consider their own feelings and the feelings of others. Skilful, lively inclusion of a range of empathy dolls in a variety of everyday situations enables children to understand about the needs of others. For example, children take the dolls to sit at the meal table and they talk about what the doll might need or like. Children are learning to value and celebrate people's similarities and differences. Children for whom English is not their first language have excellent support through their key worker's close liaison with parents. Familiar words from children's home language are used when practitioners communicate with children, and these new words are often learned by children's peers. Text in other languages within the environment, in leaflets and on notice boards enable families to feel included, informed and important. Music from other countries plays in the background and this is sometimes familiar and comforting to children. Children's art work is displayed with high regard for their contributions. For example,

they recreate individual paintings on canvas and these are displayed at their eye level for all to appreciate. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Practitioners use effective strategies to manage children's behaviour and they are superb role models for children. Children are treated with courtesy and respect, and as a result they are kind and considerate towards others. Children enjoy responsibility for helping within the routine, such as when preparing the lunch table and this develops their confidence. Positive, meaningful praise is consistently given to encourage children and this makes them feel good about themselves. Children use good manners in their interaction with each other and this is often unprompted by practitioners. Simple rules and expected behaviour are explained to children so they learn to play safely and respect equipment. For example, children are asked not to eat their snack when using the computer, because the keyboard might become sticky.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents highly value the service they receive and they express their total satisfaction with the very high standards of care, giving compliments such as 'it's a home from home', 'we can't wait for every day' and 'we just love it here'. Excellent links between families and the setting are forged through extensive means of communication. Home visits enable each child to become familiar with their key worker and careful, well planned transition ensures they settle into their new environment at a pace that suits their individual needs. Practitioners show respect for parents and they fully support them in their role in caring for their children. Parents are included in the setting's positive approach to healthy living; they can access the fresh fruit and vegetable stall and they have plenty of information about caring for their children's teeth. Notice boards and displays are very informative and provide parents with a wealth of information and ideas. Children borrow books from the setting's library to read with their families at home and there are helpful tips on how parents can support their child's interest in books and reading. Parents of children who receive nursery education funding are very happy with the level of information they are given and they feel fully involved in their child's progress. Planning is displayed for parents to read and children's development records are regularly shared.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. The manager, deputy manager and the whole staff team are fully committed to ensuring that all children receive the highest quality of care and education. Practitioners strive for further improvement through regular accurate evaluation and reflective practice. The management team is dynamic and has a very clear vision for the provision and a strong commitment to providing the best possible outcomes for all children. There are very high expectations of the staff and the managers lead by example. They proudly know and demonstrate what they do well and there are clearly identified areas that they plan to develop. Staff are well supported, very confident in the management and they respect the roles of their colleagues at all levels. Highly skilled practitioners receive many opportunities to further develop their knowledge through regular high quality training opportunities. Staff are highly motivated, enthusiastic and dedicated to their work with the children, demonstrating outstanding teamwork throughout the setting. All staff are justifiably proud of the centre and their work within it and their enthusiasm shines through in their interactions with the children and families.

Children benefit from the excellent organisation of space and resources indoors and outside which create an exciting environment for them to be in. Children play a dynamic part in the setting. They are animated and enthusiastic as they make choices about their activities and care. Secure, robust recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of all staff and management are clear about their responsibility to ensure ongoing suitability of those who work with the children. All staff communication is continuous and highly effective in meeting the needs of the children. As staff come on duty their colleagues update them immediately with pertinent information and there is regular verbal discussion throughout the day. Staff meetings are well attended and regular, providing all staff with opportunities to discuss practice issues and further develop the high quality of the service. Children's individual progress is meticulously monitored and recorded, with information used effectively to inform the planning of future activities.

All required documentation is securely in place, confidentially filed and underpins the excellent practice within the setting.

Overall, the provision meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of care the provider was asked to make available to parents the complaints procedure and to record the times of children's arrival and departure. This has been fully addressed and all necessary documentation is securely in place.

A point for consideration at the last inspection of nursery education was to consider ways to improve older children's skills in calculation. This point is thoroughly implemented throughout the rigorous planning of activities and the assessment of children's abilities and there are a wealth opportunities to challenge and extend children's mathematical development.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk