

# Willow Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number** 131749  
**Inspection date** 13/07/2011  
**Inspector** Seema Parmar

**Setting address** Willow Childrens Centre, 1a Holbrooke Court, LONDON, N7  
0BF  
**Telephone number** 020 7527 1990  
**Email** willow.eyc@islington.gov.uk  
**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## 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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Willow Children's centre registered in 2006, and is managed by Islington Early Years. The setting is situated in Upper Holloway in the London Borough of Islington. The setting operates from a purpose built single storey building. Children share access to a large secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting provides crèche facilities alongside workshops and a stay and play service, a Saturday fathers group and services for childminders. They also offer extended day care to a small number of children. The centre also offers a health visitor session, midwives post natal clinic and workshops for parents and various other groups.

The setting offers full day care to children from the local community. A maximum of 70 children in the early years age group, of these, not more than 36 may be under three years, of these, not more than 12 may be under two years at any one time may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 72 children on the Early Years Register, on roll, for full day care. Of these, 14 are priority referrals; eight children are part of the two year old pilots and 33 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting 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.

The crèche is registered for a maximum of 50 children under 8 years in the rooms; of these, not more than 20 may be under 2 years at any one time. Out of school care for no more than 15 children from five years to under eight years is held during the summer for four weeks and Easter holidays. The setting is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 48 weeks of the year. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting employs 25 members of staff; the manager holds the Early Years Professional status qualification, three are qualified teachers; 20 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications; and one staff member is working towards a qualification. The centre receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very happy, settled and enjoy their time in the busy and child friendly environment. They make good progress in their learning and development as staff work well together to provide a wide range of learning opportunities relating to their interests and enthusiasm. Generally, records, policies and procedures are in place to safeguard children. Excellent partnerships with parents and other agencies mean that children's individual needs are met very effectively. The setting is fully committed to continually monitoring and evaluating their service in order to improve outcomes for children.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- promote further opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning to further develop their language and communication skills
- review the organisation of staffing arrangements to meet the individual needs of all children, with particular regard to large group times.

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

Good procedures are in place in order to ensure that children are safeguarded at the nursery. Staff understand what to do if they have any concerns relating to child protection. Recruitment procedures are good and all staff are vetted to ensure their suitability to work with children. Staff supervise children's activities very well, and through their vigilance and explanations they help children appreciate the risks that are present in their day-to-day lives. The premises provide a safe environment for children to play and learn in although records of risk assessments are not kept consistently. The learning environment is rich in signs, symbols, books, pictures, photographs, and a wealth of resources that take into account children's different interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures. The equipment, resources and environment, as a whole, are highly stimulating for the children, motivating them to explore various learning concepts. However, at times in some rooms, organisation of the daily routine is dominant over the activity taking place. For example, all the children are gathered in a large group for circle time. Children begin to engage in the activity, however, some quickly lose interest due to the organisation of the grouping and do not actively participate in the worthwhile activity that is taking place.

Equality and diversity are threaded through many activities so that children are gaining a strong awareness of the needs of others. For example, in the foyer an eye-catching display of the world map links children's photos to the part of the world they come from and what languages they speak. As a result, children feel included and valued.

Self-evaluation is ongoing and local authority audits are invited by the setting, in order to further improve outcomes for children. In addition, the setting has begun to use Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scales (ITERS), actively looking at areas of practice to improve. Furthermore, the setting demonstrates a good capacity for improvement, as they have addressed all the recommendations raised at the last inspection. For example, clear tracking systems of observations and assessments are in place to make sure that children are making good progress in all areas of learning.

The setting is highly committed to working in partnership with others and has taken the lead in establishing effective partnerships with many local schools. The relationship has proved to be supportive to parents looking for schools, which in turn aids children's transition to 'big school'. There are well-established channels of communication between all partners involved with individual children, which successfully promotes their development and learning.

The partnership with parents is exceptional. Home visits are made by staff in order to obtain an accurate picture of the child from their parents, and thereafter use regular feedback to capture children's changing interests and development. This excellent two-way flow of information helps to ensure that children are well supported. Parents are very well informed about all aspects of their child's achievements and well-being through newsletters, daily discussions and progress consultations. Parents hold the nursery in very high regard. They comment on how quickly their children have settled and how well informed they are about their progress. Staff are described as loving, caring, excellent and inspiring.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development and are having lots of fun. Staff structure the day flexibly and make full use of the indoor and outdoor environment in order to maximise opportunities for children's progress and enjoyment. The quality of planning for individuals is of a very high standard and it is carefully informed through regular observations of children during play. Staff progress children effectively in their learning through the use of a comprehensive system of observations, reflections and planning. The system of daily planning works well in following up children's individual interests and next steps in learning. Children with additional needs are supported well as staff thoughtfully plan activities to encourage all children to reach their full potential.

Children are very well supported by staff who enhance their play experiences through effective interaction. Staff are aware of children's developmental needs, knowing when to leave them to explore independently, or when to engage them in conversation. Children make good progress in their communication, language and literacy development as the setting is involved in the 'Every child a talker' project. Children enjoy experimenting with and learning language through everyday fun and interesting activities which reflect children's interests, in order to become confident and skilled. However, opportunities for some children to fully develop their communication skills are not as well promoted as key words in their home languages are not proactively used.

Children mark make as they write numbers using their fingers to make patterns in the wet sand, use chunky markers to draw on pieces of paper, and use clipboards with paper and pens. Children have good opportunities for mathematical development as they explore filling, pouring and estimating volumes in the sand and water play areas. Children are very confident; they demonstrate a strong sense of belonging as photographs of them are displayed all around the setting, in

their profile books, and in individual laminated photograph albums. Babies show they are secure and settled as they enjoy hugs, cuddles and are individually settled for their naps. Toddlers and nursery room children play well independently and in groups, becoming active, curious and inquisitive learners. They are motivated and interested in the broad range of activities and take responsibility for choosing what they do. For example, they confidently join in with sensory play and freely select resources, such as imaginative play on the outdoor pirate ship, arts and crafts, or sand and water play. Staff are interested in what they say and do; they share books with children and join in effectively with children's play, in order to extend their learning and development.

Hygiene procedures are thorough to prevent the spread of infection. Children are well aware of the importance of hand washing routines before eating and after using the toilet. Fresh water is provided throughout the day. Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise, which helps to develop their physical skills during outdoor activities and play. For example, they confidently use a range of outdoor equipment to jump, climb, slide and balance, thereby developing their large muscles and coordination skills. Children are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle through the provision of healthy nutritious meals and snacks that support their individual dietary needs.

Children learn to keep safe as staff give gentle reminders to children while they play. Children also learn how to keep safe in the event of a fire, as emergency evacuation of the premises is practised. Children's behaviour is very good. They are happy and settled and their self-esteem is very well fostered through the praise and encouragement that is continually given by staff.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met