

The Willows Daycare Nursery



The Willows Day Nursery, Mereside, Soham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5EE

Inspection date	21 January 2016
Previous inspection date	5 March 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children are happy and enjoy their time at nursery. They have strong and trusting relationships with staff which support their sense of security and high levels of confidence.
- Parents give very positive feedback about their children's experiences. They value the frequent opportunities to share information about their children and the guidance they receive about supporting children's learning at home.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout the nursery. Staff know children well and plan activities and experiences according to their needs and interests. This results in children being inquisitive and keen to learn which in turn prepares them well for school.
- Staff understand the importance of continually improving their skills to meet the needs of children in their care. The manager holds regular supervision meetings, giving time to reflect on practice, and finding ways to improve teaching even further.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Procedures to monitor the progress of different groups of children effectively have yet to be fully implemented.
- Although children use the garden and courtyard areas to enhance their physical skills, the outdoor environment is not being used well enough, to promote their development in other areas of learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the monitoring procedures to clearly identify the progress of different groups of children
- enhance the outside areas further to provide a stimulating environment that widens the opportunities for children to extend their all-round development effectively.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and provider. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the nursery's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Jacqueline Baker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff understand their responsibilities to protect children and the procedures they should follow if they have concerns. All staff are trained in first aid and are vigilant about children's safety as they play. Thorough background checks are carried out during recruitment procedures, which helps to ensure only suitable staff join the team. Action plans are in place to improve practice and reflect ideas from both staff and parents. The manager has a good overview of children's progress which is accurately tracked and documented. However, this information has yet to be evaluated effectively to determine whether different groups of children make consistent progress. Partnership working is valued and is especially effective as children move to school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children are active and keen to explore and investigate. They learn about capacity as they fill and empty containers in the sand tray. At these times good staff interactions help them to begin to understand words, such as, full, empty, more or less. The youngest children practise their physical skills with confidence as they toddle around independently, finding toys to interest them or soft playthings to safely climb. Staff encourage the development of children's communication effectively resulting in beaming smiles as babies first attempt new words. Older children benefit from well-planned activities led by highly skilled staff who know how to extend learning effectively and keep children focused. Children understand that marks have meaning, learn to write their names, and recognise numbers. Staff assessments of children's development are accurate and are used well to support their next steps in learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff use age-appropriate tactics when necessary which support children successfully as they learn about what is, and what is not acceptable behaviour. As a result, children behave well. Children's good health is promoted by the serving of nutritious meals and snacks. Their independence is encouraged in self-care routines and in children's choice of activities. Resources and toys are plentiful and support children's effective learning throughout the nursery. Babies and the youngest children are cared for in a warm and nurturing environment. They are content to explore independently or to snuggle up with staff to read a favourite story. Children's routines from home are followed diligently by staff and make the transition to nursery as smooth and comforting as possible.

Outcomes for children are good

Children enjoy their early years at the nursery and make good progress from their starting points. Staff understand the importance of children being ready for school and provide children with the knowledge and skills to transfer with confidence.

Setting details

Unique reference number	221551
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	1028104
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 11
Total number of places	68
Number of children on roll	69
Name of provider	David George Seal
Date of previous inspection	5 March 2013
Telephone number	01353 624821

The Willows Daycare Nursery was registered in 1993. The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, 21 hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 5. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round including a holiday scheme for older children. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

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