

Inspection of Layer Preschool

Queen Elizabeth Hall, New Cut, Layer-de-la-Haye, Colchester, Essex CO2 0JU

Inspection date: 6 November 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enter the pre-school confidently and are greeted by smiling, cheerful staff. They immediately engage in play, choosing from a selection of resources that are presented on low-level shelving and racks. They guide their own play and form friendship groups, playing together or alongside each other. Children chat confidently with each other and with staff, sharing experiences from home and talking about their family members.

Children behave well and show clear motivation to learn. They act confidently, demonstrating that they feel safe and secure within the pre-school.

Children enjoy learning in the newly renovated and exciting garden. They make music with the large drums and bells. They use construction materials in the building site and have fun transporting mud from one container to another in the mud kitchen.

Staff know the children well. They have clear expectations for their future learning based on the information they know about each child. Staff plan effectively for individual children's next steps. This helps to prepare children for their next stage of learning.

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

- The pre-school is led and managed by a committee. The newly appointed administrative manager is also a member of the committee, creating a firm link between the governing body and staff. The manager has been in this position for many years and demonstrates good leadership skills.
- Staff are well supported to develop their roles, each taking responsibility for different aspects of the provision, such as role play and creative experiences. Staff meet with the manager regularly to review their working practice and to discuss ongoing suitability. They have opportunities to complete core training. However, arrangements for staff to further their knowledge, for example, through targeted training or research, are not so well established.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents speak positively about the relationship they have with their child's key person. They comment that they are provided with good opportunities to discuss their child's development. Parents are encouraged to provide the pre-school committee and staff with feedback, which is used to inform future improvements and developments.
- Children are keen and motivated learners. They have fun exploring a wide range of natural and messy play materials. For example, they squeeze cooked spaghetti through their fingers and lift it in the air with tweezers.
- Children learn about keeping healthy. They enjoy a nutritious mid-session snack,

which usually includes fresh fruit or vegetables. They help themselves to fresh drinking water when they are thirsty. Children practise their physical skills. For example, they use slides and bikes in the garden and have fun joining in with music-and-movement sessions.

- Children enjoy listening to stories, individually with their key person and in large groups. They are engaged and motivated to listen as staff read in an exciting and expressive way. Children identify and talk about different emotions when staff introduce a range of hand puppets with different facial expressions. They tell staff what might make them sad or worried and show them what their happy face looks like.
- Staff engage in discussions with children throughout the pre-school day. They encourage them to talk about what they are doing or have done at home. Staff use some clear questioning skills to encourage children to think critically. However, this aspect of teaching is not consistently strong.
- Staff give children clear directions to help them to understand the pre-school routines and rules. For example, they give children a five-minute warning before asking them to help to clear up the toys. They play a familiar 'tidy up tune' which children know and respond positively to. They take pride in the fact that they are helping to tidy up.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities to protect the children in their care. They regularly update their safeguarding knowledge, for example, through appropriate training courses and online training. They have a good understanding of the types of abuse and the indicators that might cause them to believe a child's welfare or safety is being compromised. Staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding children understand the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's safety or well-being. Staff follow the pre-school's clear health and safety procedures to ensure that children play in a safe environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to enhance their interactions with children and further improve their questioning skills to help children to think critically and solve problems
- extend the range of professional development opportunities available to staff to help them to raise the quality of teaching to an even higher level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	203940
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10072495
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	49
Name of registered person	Layer Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523814
Telephone number	01206 734348
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2016

Information about this early years setting

Layer Preschool registered in 1972. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6 and seven staff hold qualifications at level 2 or 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hughes

Inspection activities

- The inspector and manager had a tour of the pre-school and discussed the way in which the curriculum is planned and delivered, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector observed an adult-led activity and evaluated it with the manager.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the administrative manager, the manager and staff. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working at the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to at the inspection.

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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