

# Layer Preschool

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

<b>Inspection date</b>	30/04/2013
Previous inspection date	03/10/2012

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is satisfactory

- Children form secure attachments with staff which supports their well-being and builds their confidence. Children are well supported with their transitions into the pre-school and future transitions onto school.
- Staff communicate well with parents regarding any particular needs a child may have. This promotes continuity of approach and ensures additional support is sought, if required.
- Children are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle, through regular exercise and healthy snacks.

### It is not yet good because

- There is not sufficient consultation with parents to establish a child's starting points. Parents are not always kept up to date with their child's progress and development, or encouraged to share information regarding their child's achievements at home.
- Activities provided do not always offer sufficient ongoing interest and challenge for older, more able children or children who stay all day.
- Self-evaluation is not systematic, nor sufficiently rigorous, to identify weaknesses and ensure they are promptly and suitably addressed.
- Monitoring and assessment does not always offer a clear indication of each child's progress, or accurately inform the future planning for their learning and development.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the two main play rooms and the pre-school garden.
- The inspector spoke with the staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection and discussed activities with them.
- The inspector had a discussion with the nursery manager and members of the committee.
- The inspector and manager undertook a joint observation together.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journeys, planning documentation, the pre-school's action plan and a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of the staff.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Hazel Meadows

## **Full Report**

### **Information about the setting**

Layer Preschool was originally established in 1972. It is registered on the Early Years Register. It is a committee run pre-school and operates from two halls within the Queen Elizabeth village hall, in Layer-de-la-Haye, Essex. The pre-school serves the local community and wider area and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs six members of child care staff, all of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. Two members of staff are working towards an Early Years degree and two are working towards a level 3 qualification.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. A lunch club is available every day. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 56 children attending, all of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

**To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- improve ways of including parents' contributions to their child's initial assessment on entry. Be more proactive to engage and involve parents by regularly offering feedback about their child's ongoing progress at the pre-school and by encouraging and including parents' contributions regarding their child's progress and achievements at home
- ensure the planning, and activities provided, are based on individual children's needs and matched to their stage of development. Ensure activities are varied and used effectively to offer sufficient ongoing interest and challenge, particularly for older and more able children and children who stay all day.

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

- implement rigorous and systematic self-evaluation, which includes the views of parents and children, to ensure that any weaknesses are swiftly identified and promptly and effectively addressed. Use self-evaluation to improve practice and make well-targeted plans to improve learning and development opportunities for children
- streamline methods for monitoring and assessing children's progress to ensure they clearly and effectively identify each child's progress and offer a useful tool to aid future individual planning for the next stage in a child's learning.

**Inspection judgements****How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

When a child starts at the setting, staff use discussions with parents and their own observations to help them get to know a child. Staff are considering ways of gathering more information from parents to help with establishing each child's capabilities and starting points as currently, these are not always clearly defined. Staff maintain a learning journey development record for each child. This contains observations, supported by photographs and examples of the children's work. Any next steps are recorded separately and used to inform planning, which is recorded on another sheet. However, this method does not offer a clear overview of each child's progress and learning. Learning journeys are shared with parents at parent evenings, however, not all parents have seen them and the routine sharing of information with parents regarding their child's learning and development is limited. Staff work well with parents, but do not regularly seek parents' contributions and engage them regarding their children's progress and achievements at home. This hinders staff in planning effectively to meet each child's learning needs . The

key person completes a summary of children's progress at age two, which is shared with parents. This helps identify where any additional level of support or challenge may be required. Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development and are gaining confidence and skills to help to prepare them for the next steps in their learning and for school.

Children are keen to come into the pre-school and confidently explore the activities available. Clearly defined zones cover different areas of learning and help to focus children's play, aided by well deployed staff. Staff have a sound knowledge of how children learn and ensure the educational programmes cover all areas of learning. Broad themes offer some focus and these are adequately flexible to accommodate children's individual interests. Staff set up the hall prior to the children's arrival in the morning. However, while two new group activities are introduced in the afternoon, none of the main resources are changed. This limits the amount of ongoing interest and challenge available to older or more able children and those children who stay all day. Children relish playing in the outdoor area, although, this is only available to the children for part of the session. Outdoors, the children practise their physical skills as they use the slide and ride-on toys with increasing skill and coordination. Indoors, staff set up a physical activity known as 'sport attack' in the second hall. Children are offered a range of colourful resources, such as beanbags, hoops, stepping stones and balls. This is to encourage children to practise and develop their physical skills and to raise awareness of the effects of exercise on their body.

Children dig eagerly for worms in the planter and are keen to show their findings to staff and visitors. Staff have planted seeds with the children, which they will encourage them to nurture, helping children to understand about living things. Staff are currently developing a section of the outdoor area to offer children a greater range of natural and sensory experiences and exploration. Children explore a range of media, such as sand, glittery play dough and craft activities. They manage scissors well as they cut tissue paper for a topic about birds' nests. Children begin to understand and explore different technology as they freely use a camera in the pre-school, and many competently use the laptop. Their communication skills are developing well, encouraged by attentive staff. Mobile telephones promote children's conversation in their role play. Mark-making and pre-writing skills are encouraged as children use the chalk board and they freely use the pens and paper available, with some older children able to form recognisable letters.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

The pre-school is bright, inviting and well resourced. Most activities are set out before the children arrive, but children can select freely from the easily accessible activities. Children are supported sensitively by caring staff to help them settle at the pre-school. Staff liaise verbally with parents to ensure each child's transition from home into the pre-school is a smooth and positive experience. Staff are considering ways of gathering more information

from parents to help better meet and understand children's individual needs.

Children develop trusting relationships with staff and know them by name. They freely approach staff with comments and requests and are also confident to talk to visitors at the pre-school. This confidence supports them with future transitions to other settings. Children visit the adjacent school, and teachers visit the pre-school, to help promote a seamless transition into school. Displays of photographs, taken in the schools children will attend, are being made to help support children further.

Staff provide positive examples of good behaviour and treat children with kindness and respect. They support children with learning how to manage their behaviour and emotions. Staff intervene, if required, and offer clear explanations and choices to children. Consequently, children are learning how to manage their own behaviour and are becoming increasingly tolerant of others, for example, when sharing toys or waiting their turn. Boundaries are consistently applied, and positive behaviour is acknowledged and praised by staff, to help reinforce children's understanding.

A healthy lifestyle is promoted as children have daily opportunities for fresh air, daylight and exercise in the outdoor area. Snacks are varied, healthy and nutritious and staff encourage children to try different foods and make positive choices. Children's independence and self-help skills are encouraged well at snack time as they lay out the plates, pour their own drinks, cut up their own fruit and spread their own crackers. Parents provide their child's packed lunch, with the pre-school offering advice about healthy foods. Staff are mindful of hygiene whilst preparing snack or changing nappies. Children mostly manage their personal needs well and learn good hygiene habits through regular routines. They wash their hands before snack and after toileting, with adult support as required.

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

Staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection. An Ofsted investigation concerning safeguarding procedures was undertaken in November 2012. Following the investigation an action was set to ensure the policy and procedures to safeguard children are implemented and are followed in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board. Since the investigation four staff have attended safeguarding children training and are confident to apply appropriate procedures, if required, to protect children. A record of Disclosure and Barring Service Checks is in place for all staff. Clear, written policies are available to parents and are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet current requirements. Staff are well deployed and risk assessments are undertaken, enabling children to play freely and securely. Emergency evacuation is practised to ensure it works effectively and that children are familiar with the process without being fearful.

Staff reflect on practice and have made some improvements since the last inspection. For example, a cosy area has been introduced and improvements in the outdoor area are

ongoing. Staff are also considering alternative ways of organising snack time to prevent the long periods of waiting in the toilet area, as children queue to wash their hands. The leadership are currently reviewing and considering different methods of self-evaluation, to improve its rigor and to ensure it is well-targeted and effective in practice. An action plan has recently been introduced to encourage more focus and time-limited responses to identified weaknesses. Staff development is encouraged through monthly supervisions and annual appraisals. Any identified training needs are addressed to enhance practice in the pre-school. Monitoring of the educational programmes is satisfactory. All staff are involved with reviewing practice against the seven areas of learning and this is being developed alongside the revised self-evaluation process.

Positive and trusting partnerships are established with parents and carers and some parents are actively involved on the management committee. Staff liaise closely with parents, and with other early years professionals if appropriate, to ensure that children receive any additional support required at an early stage. Comments received from parents on the day of the inspection are mostly positive. They are generally happy with the care and experiences their children receive. The pre-school supports regular discussions between staff and parents. However, the current procedure for parents collecting their children is not always conducive to sharing feedback about individual children. Some parents comment they would appreciate more feedback about their child's welfare, learning and development. The pre-school establishes purposeful links with other settings children attend, and with childminders who collect the children, to promote consistency with regard to children's care and learning.

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.



## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	203940
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	893847
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	32
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	56
<b>Name of provider</b>	Layer Pre-School Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	03/10/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 734348

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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