

Layston Pre School

Layston First School, The Causeway, Buntingford, Hertfordshire, SG9 9EU



Inspection date

9 June 2015

Previous inspection date

3 June 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff demonstrate a consistently good quality of teaching and provide children with interesting and challenging activities. For example, children enjoy using their hands and brushes to explore and mix a selection of paints. Staff skilfully question children and allow them suitable time to respond, supporting their communication and language.
- Children benefit from the onsite school facilities, such as an outdoor classroom and stimulating garden. They practise their physical skills, as they maintain balance on tyres set at different heights and negotiate space as they run up and down the hills. Furthermore, they regularly have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor areas to promote their good health.
- Partnerships with parents are well established through an effective two-way flow of information. Staff inform parents of the weekly activities and hold regular meetings to share children's progress. As a result, parents are involved at all stages of children's development and can extend the learning at home.
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements are understood and met well. All staff have received safeguarding training so are aware of their responsibility to record and report any child protection concerns. In addition, they ensure the premises remains secure by vigilantly locking outdoor gates between sessions to prevent unauthorised access.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The provider has not yet fully embedded her plans for peer observations to continuously strengthen staff practice. Therefore, they do not always enhance children's care and development to the very optimum.
- Occasionally, staff do not provide more-able children with additional responsibility to further develop their levels of confidence, in a range of situations.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- implement and evaluate the planned system for peer observations, so that staff's good, and sometimes excellent, practice is maintained and constantly enhanced
- maximise opportunities for more-able children to take on further responsibility within routine activities and tasks, in order to develop their levels of confidence, in different situations.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's activities indoors, outdoors and during the snack time routines. She spoke to the staff and children, at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the provider and held discussions with all members of staff.
- The inspector sampled the pre-school documentation, including a self-evaluation form, policies and procedures, children's learning journals and registers.
- The inspector took account of the views of the parents and carers through discussions on the day.
- The inspector saw evidence of the qualifications and suitability of all persons working on the premises, and other documentation in relation to the safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Inspector

Rachel Pepper

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff draw on their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage to plan a well-balanced programme of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Recent training enables them to better organise experiences to maintain children's enjoyment. For example, staff set up a fire engine in the role-play area to support their current theme of People who help us. Children use their imaginations to drive the vehicle and put the fires out with foam hoses. Staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's early writing skills. They support them to master pencil control and recognise how letters look and sound. Children complete puzzles suitable for their age, encouraging them to think and solve problems. These activities support children's readiness for school. The effective key-person system includes time for staff to work in small groups with the children they take responsibility for. This allows them to consistently follow children's next steps for learning. Furthermore, precise assessments inform planning to ensure all children make good progress.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children is good

Children behave well as staff provide clear and concise explanations about their expectations. For example, they remind children to use nice words with their friends and praise them for super sitting. As a result, they play well alongside others and follow instructions with ease. Children take part in various group activities, including a weekly school assembly. These teach them to work cooperatively and learn valuable social skills. They learn to accommodate the fears and feelings of others through discussion and shared stories. Children begin to develop their self-help skills, as staff encourage them to put on their aprons and pour their own drinks. However, they do not always provide more-able children with additional roles to fully promote their confidence. For example, by sharing out the food at snack time. Nonetheless, children are confident learners who eagerly embrace challenge. They show awareness that they can ask adults for help as they need. This is because they have developed secure, affectionate bonds with staff.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision is good

The provider has successfully addressed the previous recommendations. Staff now use focus sheets to closely observe and record children's involvement, during planned activities. The provider reviews the overall progress of children every term; this helps her to ensure that they regularly access all areas of learning. She uses self-evaluation effectively to identify priorities for improvement and parent preferences. Future plans include installing an outdoor canopy and extending the vegetable patch to further enhance children's outdoor experiences. Staff are efficiently deployed in line with their current skills and are clear on their individual roles; this contributes towards the smooth running of the setting. Staff benefit from regular supervision, including observations of their practice. However, the provider has not yet implemented plans for staff to observe each other to share and enhance their good quality teaching. Effective links with other professionals enable the provider to keep up to date with any changes and share ideas for best practice.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY317322
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	862255
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	43
Name of provider	Margaret Teresa Ball
Date of previous inspection	3 June 2009
Telephone number	01763 272505

Layston Pre-School was registered in 2005. It operates from one classroom in Layston First School in Buntingford. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including one with Early Years Professional status. The pre-school is open every weekday from 9am to 12 noon and from 12.45pm to 15.15pm during term time. Extra provision is available at lunchtime from 12 noon until 1pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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