

Inspection of Bell Day Pre-school

Lord Butler Leisure Centre, Peaslands Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 3EG

Inspection date: 16 May 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are at the centre of this unique pre-school. Fun-loving staff personalise care and teaching to ensure all children's individual personalities and characters shine through and they flourish. Staff get to know children incredibly well before they start. They offer a home visit, bespoke settling-in processes and a robust key-person system, all adding to children's steady transition to pre-school. Staff use their in-depth knowledge of children to plan activities that consider individual interests and are familiar to them. Therefore, they feel safe and comfortable in their environment and ready to explore, play and learn.

Children benefit from a superb and endless array of wider experiences in the local community, where they learn about the wider world and their place in it. These extra-curricular activities include swimming, trips to the local town, market, pet shop, forest school and visits from the local police and fire service. This well-rounded start to children's early education, creates curiosity and wonder for life-long learning. Children develop care and empathy for living things. They remind visitors to look at a spider from a distance, so not to hurt or scare it. Staff reinforce expected kind and positive behaviours with meaningful praise for children's care of the spider.

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

- Staff set out the knowledge and skills that they want children to be able to know. To enhance children's pencil control and support early writing skills, staff bring the curriculum to life with imaginative and fun teaching. For example, following children's interest in mini-beasts, staff plan stimulating activities to help children to develop their fine motor skills. While some children enjoying painting a picture of a ladybird, others practise their scissor skills, cutting pretend worms made from spaghetti.
- Robust assessment of children's progress means staff identify any gaps in children's learning and plan activities to help reduce these. Consequently, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make very good progress from their starting points. However, at times staff do not consistently use spontaneous learning moments that naturally arise during children's play, to fully extend children's overall learning and development.
- Children are proud when staff praise them for their good behaviour and positive attitudes towards others. This contributes to children's growing ability to regulate their own behaviours and emotions. When children become upset, staff comfort and reassure them sensitively. However, there are some inconsistencies in how staff respond to unwanted behaviours such as when children start running indoors. This reduces children's ability to fully understand the

importance of following fair rules and expected behaviours, so they can begin managing and adapting their behaviour themselves, to assure their own safety and well-being at pre-school.

- Children develop healthy eating habits as they experience growing fruit and vegetables in the allotment and cooking and eating it at the pre-school. Physical exercise is engaging, varied and supports healthy lifestyles.
- Consistent daily routines mean children learn to take responsibility and develop skills they need to be independent and make choices, for example, about when they want to have a refreshment and snack. Mealtimes are incredibly sociable and well organised, preparing children for when they have lunch at school. For example, they carry their own plates to the table and pour their own drinks confidently.
- Parental partnership is at the heart of the pre-school. Parents are overwhelmingly complimentary about daily updates they receive about their children's care and learning. Regular invites to discuss their children's progress means parents can further their children's learning at home. Staff make timely referrals and work closely with parents and outside professionals to ensure all children with SEND leave the pre-school prepared for their next school.
- The management team has strong links with local schools. This fosters good relationships between the teachers and parents and supports children's smooth transition to school. Staff have a wealth of opportunities to attend training and develop their skills. Staff express that they feel valued by the management team and really love their jobs. This helps ensure a positive and happy atmosphere for everyone.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to consistently provide meaningful interactions to further enhance and extend children's learning
- implement effective teaching strategies consistently to support children's deeper understanding of safe and positive behaviours and the impact their behaviour has on others.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2524094
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10388540
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Bell Day Nursery Community Interest Company
Registered person unique reference number	RP909292
Telephone number	01799 524228
Date of previous inspection	16 July 2019

Information about this early years setting

Bell Day Nursery registered in 2019. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. They are supported by directors and managers from the sister setting, who hold qualifications at level 6 and have early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm Monday to Thursday and 8am to 5pm on Friday. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Louisa Taylor

Inspection activities

- The management team and inspector completed a tour of the pre-school, both indoors and outdoors to understand how the early years provision and curriculum are organised. Additionally, the management team showed the inspector the premises and discussed how they ensure it is safe and suitable.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact that this had on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of group activities with the manager and also discussed self-evaluation.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector held a meeting with the management team and also discussed self-evaluation. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the pre-school and a selection of other records.

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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