

Meon Springs - Itchen Abbas

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY347979

Inspection date

22/03/2011

Inspector

ISP Inspection

Setting address

Itchen Abbas Village Hall, Main Road, Itchen Abbas,
Winchester, Hampshire, SO21 1BQ

Telephone number

01730 829377

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Meon Springs Montessori, Itchen Abbas, was registered in 2007. It is privately owned. The group operates from the village hall in Itchen Abbas, near Winchester. There is an enclosed outside play area. Children come from the villages in the surrounding area. The setting is registered for 26 children on the Early Years Register. The setting is also registered and on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 28 children on roll, 19 of whom are in receipt of nursery funding. It operates on weekdays during term time from 9.00am to 1.00pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The group uses the Montessori method of teaching. It accepts children with special educational needs and learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language. There are four members of staff with two or three members working each day depending on how many children are in. They all hold an appropriate early year's qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare and learning is promoted successfully. The children's individual needs are met due to the staff's knowledge of the children and their positive interaction. Children's learning is progressing well; children have a range of activities that promotes their development in all areas. Most safeguarding procedures are in place however there is a breach of regulation, and therefore an action has been set. This is a fully inclusive setting where all children feel valued and included. Staff monitor and evaluate the provision and make changes that benefit the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- seek written consent from parents for the seeking of emergency medical treatment and/or advice (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 25/03/2011

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review staffing arrangements to enable adult-led activities to happen in the garden

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a secure knowledge of how to safeguard children. All staff have been fully vetted to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are in place and used as a working tool to ensure that all areas the children access are safe. The areas in this multi-use building that children access are safe and all doors are locked once the children have arrived. Policies and procedures are in place and shared with the parents to ensure both parties are aware of their responsibilities. Most written permissions are in place however there is a breach in regulation and an action set as they do not have written permission from parents for the seeking of emergency medical treatment and/or advice.

The experienced and knowledgeable staff monitor the provision and all staff are involved in the self-evaluation process. They have invited parents to input to the evaluation to ensure they are meeting the parents' needs as well. Where possible they respond quickly for instance, they have recently obtained a digital photo frame which is updated each week as the parents wanted to see more pictures of their children at the nursery. More in-depth improvements are made which take longer to fully develop for instance they want to promote the children's learning outside further and this is a work in progress.

Children access a wide range of suitable and good quality equipment which is displayed to encourage children to become independent in their choices. The majority of the indoor resources are linked to the Montessori method of learning which encourages children to investigate and then return the resources to their correct place. The environment is child friendly, welcoming and conducive to children's learning. The layout of the room and garden enable the children to have a free-flow provision where they are effectively supported to learn through their play. This is a fully inclusive setting where all children are acknowledged as unique and their needs met through the positive relationships they have with the staff who know them well. Children learn about the wider world and other cultures through resources and activities that are included in the planning.

Partnership with other providers and the parents is outstanding. The nursery work extremely hard to develop the excellent relationships they have with parents and other carers. The nursery staff visit the other early years providers and they use a communication book to exchange ongoing information to ensure continuity of care and learning between the providers. Parents are asked to contribute to their children's learning journeys which are on display each day if the parents wish to look at them, they are invited in each term to discuss the progress their children are making and to help identify their next steps, they discuss their child's progress regularly. Parents receive regular newsletters and there are notices on display ensuring they are fully aware of the activities their children are involved with each day.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

All of the staff have a good understanding of Early Years Foundation Stage and the Montessori method of learning. They are skilled at identifying the children's individual learning needs and incorporating them into the planning. Regular observations are taken and effective monitoring enables all staff to identify each child's next steps in learning and promote their learning through play. Children receive good support and challenges from the staff who are on hand during their free play activities to extend and guide as necessary. Staff are flexible in their approach promoting a balance of child-led and adult-initiated activities.

The children have a great time outside they become engaged and play together extremely well, they use the climbing frame and bark below engaging in lots of conversations with each other. They co-operate and discuss what they are going to do next. They problem solve as they turn the underneath of the climbing frame into a tent using the weaving materials. Children use the trowels to dig and bury treasure making hills to hide the pirates in.

Their physical development is challenged and promoted as they are allowed to take risks; they clamber up the sides of the frame or slide down the fireman's pole, they climb up the slide and jump off the frame. They make a train as they join together to slide down the slide together. However it is at times difficult for members of staff to engage the children for more than a couple of minutes as there is usually only staff member in the garden. When able the staff extend the children's play outside for instance by obtaining more resources to turn an area in the garden into a car wash. Children enjoy the activity and it is linked to numbers and an understanding of the signs for stop and go due to the positive interaction of the staff member.

Children have many resources that support their sensory development. They roll and cut out the play dough with good interaction from the staff that encourage their understanding of mathematical language as they cut the dough into halves and quarters. Whilst playing with the water they identify the different number shapes that are in it. Their creative skills are encouraged through a range of activities such as making jewellery carefully threading the jewels and pasta onto string. They use different materials to colour, glue and stick as they create a range of pictures. The organisation of the session allows children to concentrate and persevere on their chosen task.

Children are encouraged to be independent throughout the sessions; they select what they wish to play with and replace the resources when they have finished with them. Children take turns to help lay the table ready for lunch and they help themselves to the items in their lunch boxes and are independent in their self-care skills. Such experiences help children to make smooth transitions to school.

Children engage in activities that support their understanding of healthy lifestyles,

they access the outdoors each day and engage in a range of physical activities both inside and outside. They pour themselves drinks when they are thirsty and help themselves to a small snack during the session if they get hungry. Lunch and snack are taken as large group where they sit and converse with each other and the staff who sit with them.

Children's behaviour is very good. All children show a sense of security; they know the rules of the nursery and show care for the resources knowing where they have to be returned to. They are very caring and polite to each other; they will for instance thank another child for handing them the tape. Staff praise and encourage the children throughout the session building on the children's self-esteem.

Children are comfortable, confident and feel very safe within the environment; they know the routine of the day giving them a sense of security. They have warm relationships with the staff and each other knowing that the staff will respond positively to meet their needs. They have practised the evacuation procedure ensuring they would know what to do if they needed to leave the premises quickly. All of the staff have a good understanding of Early Years Foundation Stage and the Montessori method of learning. They are skilled at identifying the children's individual learning needs and incorporating them into the planning. Regular observations are taken and effective monitoring enables all staff to identify each child's next steps in learning and promote their learning through play. Children receive good support and challenges from the staff who are on hand during their free play activities to extend and guide as necessary. Staff are flexible in their approach promoting a balance of child-led and adult-initiated activities.

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Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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