

The Itchen Valley Montessori



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

Inspection date	30 April 2015
Previous inspection date	22 March 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Outstanding	1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Outstanding	1
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Staff are caring and nurture a sense of joy, wonder, compassion, curiosity and imagination in the children. As a result, children's enthusiasm for learning helps them to achieve high levels of progress across all areas of learning and development.
- Recent improvements in the way staff observe, record and assess children's progress greatly enhance continuity in care and learning between home and the nursery. Staff share and celebrate children's interests and achievements with parents more promptly. Parents say this enables them to provide additional encouragement and create ways to develop their children's latest interests elsewhere.
- Excellent, creative teaching from external specialists in music, French and physical exercise, enrich children's lives and introduce them to new teachers and new styles of learning. Children develop high levels of self-control and increasing confidence in different social situations.
- Careful monitoring and review of children's progress ensures that staff and parents quickly identify and manage any gaps, delays and particular strengths in children's development.
- Children's welfare is greatly enhanced as staff routinely update their training and improve their practice. This includes a focus on safeguarding and protecting children, first aid and administering medicines, preventing and monitoring accidents, and meeting individual children's special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The manager and her team create a high-quality nursery that is welcoming, safe, and stimulating. Children become increasingly independent as they explore freely and learn respect for each other, their resources and their community.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities for children to create, share or act out narratives together outdoors.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a wide range of activities across all areas of the nursery and talked with staff and children about what they were doing.
- The inspector reviewed documents and procedures relating to safeguarding, staffing, supervision, risk assessment, equal opportunities, and health and safety, and checked a selection of other policies.
- The inspector sampled a range of children's records, the nursery's systems for planning, evaluation, and exchanging information with parents and external professionals.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and reviewed written communication from parents.
- The inspector met with the leadership team and conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Inspection findings

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

Staff provide a high-quality nursery where children flourish in all aspects of their learning and development. Underpinning children's joyful and harmonious explorations, is a deep and solid understanding of how and what children learn. Staff regularly reflect on the impact of their teaching, the levels of progress children are making, and how they can inspire them further. Consequently, they provide a wealth of rich learning opportunities where children strengthen new physical skills, develop confidence in themselves, and learn to respect and communicate with each other. Staff are Montessori trained and implement their training and their materials highly effectively. For example, children make excellent progress in mathematics as they investigate purposefully designed resources and imaginatively act out life experiences in their post office.

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

Children quickly settle into the nursery as staff value parents' views, work sensitively with the challenges of parenting, and surround children with warmth and security. Staff support children's chosen activities so that they feel increasingly confident at assessing and managing or avoiding risks. For example, young children concentrate intently as they transfer water to other areas of the garden. Older children return repeatedly to the climbing frame as they enjoy mastering the use of a fire fighter's pole. Staff recognise, respect and delight in children's persistence at conquering new challenges. Children are curious, self-motivated and happy in their play. They quickly adapt to changes in their lives and are emotionally well prepared for school. Staff share astute assessments of children's progress and liaise effectively with parents and with staff from a range of local schools.

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

The manager diligently studies, reflects and improves her nursery to ensure children receive increasingly high levels of care and education. Under her supervision, a well-qualified and committed team combines individual strengths to deliver an exemplary nursery experience for the children. The manager has an excellent understanding of her responsibilities, as co-owner of the nursery, to ensure the staff meet all the safeguarding and welfare requirements. The co-owners monitor the effective implementation of procedures to protect children, assess and minimise risks across the premises and ensure staff meet children's individual needs. The manager has high standards and encourages her team to evaluate and reflect on their practice across all areas of the nursery. Together they drive forward improvements which directly benefit outcomes for all children. For example, a recent training event ignited staff's enthusiasm for 'talking tents'. The purchase of a large outdoor tepee provides all-weather cover and opens new possibilities for children's learning and development outdoors, particularly in their literacy development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY347979
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	837859
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	Butler Butcher Limited
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2011
Telephone number	01730 829377

The Itchen Valley Montessori registered in 2007. It operates from the village hall in Itchen Abbas, near Winchester. The nursery is open each weekday during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am to 12.15pm each day, except Monday when the nursery opens until 2.45pm. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three, and four. Six staff work with the children, four of whom hold relevant qualifications between level 3 and level 7. The manager holds a relevant degree and Montessori training. The nursery follows the Montessori philosophy of teaching.

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