

The Montessori School House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY394255

Inspection date

19/01/2010

Inspector

Joanne Graham

Setting address

Christchurch School House, Crossways, Kintbury,
HUNGERFORD, Berkshire, RG17 9ST

Telephone number

01488657860

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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

The Montessori School House was registered in 2009. It is a pre-school provision operating from two adjacent rooms separate from the family home within Kintbury, Berkshire. The provision is registered to care for a maximum of 15 children in the early years age group at any one time and has the option to take 15 children under eight at any one time. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

The setting is open every week day during school term times from 9.00 am until 3.00 pm. Session times are 9.00am to 12.15pm and 12.15pm to 3.00pm with a lunch club from 12.15pm to 1.15pm. There is an option to stay for lunch after a morning session and/or all day. Children access secure enclosed outdoor play areas and access to the premises is on street level. The group serves the local community in Kintbury and surrounding areas. The setting has provision to support children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are currently 12 children on roll, of whom six are in receipt of nursery education funding. The provision employs two staff and both hold relevant childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff ensure the environment is safe and enabling to support the uniqueness of each child. Staff demonstrate they have the drive for continuous improvement and the ability to maintain the current practice standards. Mandatory documentation is well maintained and stored securely. This ensures the children's well-being and that security is a priority. Relationships with parents are very strong and significantly contribute to the children's overall development in all areas of learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve children's access to toys and equipment to support them with skills for the future
- make sure emergency evacuation procedures are practised more regularly and safety checklists are completed along with the current system
- improve the current written observation and assessment system to ensure these are completed more frequently and detail the area of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff self-evaluate their practice and identify their strengths and weaknesses. They have a positive approach to improve the setting and aptitude to maintain their current high standards. The manager makes sure the robust recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers. Staff have a good knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and procedures if they have concerns. The named person has attended safeguarding training and additional literature supports the setting to ensure children's well-being is promoted. Staff complete a full risk assessment to ensure the environment is safe and secure. Their practice helps to minimise potential hazards to children, although the current system to record details on daily checklists are not being regularly completed for the outside areas. Staff have a good knowledge of emergency evacuation procedures although these are not practised regularly for all the children. Staff monitor who enters the premises, maintain ratios at all times and ensure children are not left alone with persons not vetted. This safeguards their well-being.

The setting supports, respects and acknowledges children's differences and individual needs very well. The enabling environment promotes inclusion for all the children and the staff's support and guidance significantly impacts on children's individual learning needs and all round development. Children have sufficient space to move around safely and to expand their play comfortably. They are confident to self-select from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment. The low open shelving encourages their independence and supports the children in making suitable choices. Children's behaviour is good and boundaries are consistently managed. The setting's rules help children to stay and feel safe; for example, walking when crossing the car park and sitting down when eating.

The excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to the continuity in children's care and learning. Staff talk to parents prior to the child starting to establish the children's developmental levels, family context and their interests. Staff maintain these verbal dialogues to make sure parents are kept up to date with their child's achievements and next steps to learning and welcome all contributions from parents regarding the children's all round development. Written newsletters and notice boards ensure parents are kept informed with up to date details of the provision and their child.

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

Regular indoor and outdoor activities ensure that children benefit from energetic play activities, as part of a healthy lifestyle. They match movement to music, run and climb. They learn about the natural world and their environment as they explore opportunities in the garden areas. They especially like running between the trees in the orchard, watching the bulbs grow that they planted and exploring how snow melts. Children are busily occupied and keen to join in activities. They are

happy and comfortable, settle well to their chosen activities and confidently approach staff for cuddles and support. The varied weekly activities and experiences expand children's learning opportunities both inside and outdoors. This encourages the children to explore their surroundings and to notice change.

Children develop their numeracy and problem-solving skills as they play and staff enhance this learning within everyday activities by asking questions to help children think. Children cut out numerals and then count these whilst using dough and work out which pieces fit together best when building with the construction equipment. They are confident and articulate communicators and access a wide variety of books and written words to increase their understanding that text has meaning. These skills have a positive impact for children's future economic well-being, although as children have a limited selection of interactive equipment and toys which introduce technology, this is not being fully supported. Staff cater for children's dietary needs and promote healthy eating, offering choices of fruit at snack times.

Staff's enthusiasm, encouragement and praise give children the confidence to 'have a go', explore their surroundings and to make suitable choices. Staff's knowledge of children's levels of development ensures they support individual learning needs well and promote the children's next steps to learning. However, written observations and assessments are in their infancy and are not completed regularly. The balance of adult and child led activities fosters active learning and engages children well. Their play is purposeful with both spontaneous and planned activities. Children become familiar with the wider world by participating in French sessions, celebrating festivals and accessing a good range of resources. For example, globes, maps of the world and positive images of diversity.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	1
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	2
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
--	---

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met