

Inspection of The Montessori School House

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

Inspection date: 24 November 2022

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are welcomed into the setting and quickly settle into activities. Children benefit from warm, nurturing relationships with their key persons, who know the children well. Staff are responsive to the children's needs, and children feel safe, secure and confident their needs are going to be met.

Staff plan the environment so that children can freely access activities of their choice. Activities are inviting and represent all areas of the curriculum. Children are motivated to learn and confident to express their wishes. They are proud to show what they have learned, for example counting to five in Spanish. Staff skilfully introduce and reinforce new language through songs, stories, themes and conversations. Children share their knowledge of what a nocturnal animal is and learn about their habitats. They fill in the missing words to songs and invent their own versions of songs. Older children identify words that rhyme. This helps children to develop good communication and language skills.

Children learn about the world around them and celebrate different cultures and festivals. Children access a range of resources that reflect modern Britain. Staff involve parents in planning activities associated with different cultures, helping children to understand that their own cultures are respected and valued.

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

- Staff encourage children to develop their problem-solving and mathematical skills in their daily interactions and through play. When playing a game, staff prompt children to work out how many more pictures they need and how many spaces they have left. This helps children learn to solve simple mathematical problems.
- Children have daily opportunities to be physically active, both indoors and outdoors. They have regular access to fresh air and a range of activities to challenge their physical skills. Indoors, they participate in movement and dance activities, supporting their physical well-being and good health.
- Overall, staff plan a suitably ambitious curriculum that supports children's progress. They encourage children to experiment, for example mixing oil and food colouring together to learn about density. They take part in Spanish lessons, proudly sharing that they can count to five in Spanish. However, staff do not always make the most of spontaneous teaching opportunities that arise during play.
- Children follow stringent hygiene practices. They know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They follow routines for wiping their noses. Staff support children with healthy eating. For instance, children make fruit salad and create posters displaying healthy foods. Children learn to make

healthy choices.

- Children's behaviour is good. They work together to solve problems, working as a team to move a ride-on car that is stuck. They support each other in following rules and routines. For example, older children remind younger children to put away their cushions after circle time. Children learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.
- Children practise their independence skills frequently. For example, they open their own lunch boxes, put on their own waterproof suits and boots and peg their shoes together. Doing things for themselves enables children to grow in confidence.
- Parents speak highly of the care and education the children receive and describe the manager as 'an exceptional educator'. They receive information about their children's progress and how they can support their learning at home. Staff involve parents in planning activities. For example, staff invite parents to talk to the children about their jobs. Partnerships with parents are strong, helping children to feel valued and supported.
- Staff complete training focused on the needs of the children in their care. For instance, staff completed training on supporting speech and language and learned the importance of allowing children time to process information. However, staff's professional development opportunities are not yet focused or targeted enough to raise the quality of teaching to the highest levels.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are aware of their duty and responsibility to keep children safe. Staff are able to identify signs and symptoms of abuse that may indicate a child is suffering from harm. They know the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about children in their care. Staff complete regular training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date, including knowledge of female genital mutilation and the 'Prevent' duty. The manager uses effective recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable. Staff complete regular safety checks to minimise any potential hazards and provide a safe environment for the children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- make the most of teaching opportunities that arise as children play, to build on children's next steps in learning more consistently
- develop a focused programme of training to support ongoing professional development, to raise the quality of teaching to the highest level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY394255
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10235316
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 3
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	6
Name of registered person	Rees, Rhian
Registered person unique reference number	RP513343
Telephone number	07810797170
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Montessori School House registered in 2009. It is situated in Kintbury, Berkshire. The nursery is open from Tuesday to Thursday, from 9am until 3pm, during school term times. There are three members of staff who work directly with the children. They all hold relevant early years qualifications from at least level 3, including one who has qualified teacher status. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nina Fortuna

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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