

Chichester Montessori Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY239075
Inspection date	07 June 2007
Inspector	Michele, Karen Beasley
Setting Address	Vinnetrow Farm Business Centre, Vinnetrow Road, Runcton, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 1QH
Telephone number	01243 788331
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Registered person	Chichester Montessori Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Chichester Montessori Limited has been registered since 1996 in a specifically designed building located in Runcton, near Chichester, West Sussex. The nursery has had new ownership since April 2002. The facility operates Monday to Friday all year round from 8:00 - 18:00, although sessional times are also offered.

The nursery is set in a light, bright airy building with lots of space available to the children. There is an enclosed outside play space which includes a covered area and an all weather play surface.

The setting is registered for 64 children under 5 years of age. There are currently 85 children on roll, there are 38 funded children. The group have children attending with additional needs and English as an additional language.

There are 12 full time staff and seven part time staff, 16 of which hold suitable childcare qualifications and three of whom are currently working towards their qualifications. Over half of the staff hold a first aid qualification. There are two staff who are named Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators; all staff have attended child protection training.

The nursery combines the Foundation Stage of learning with the Montessori method of teaching. The nursery are working towards the West Sussex Kite mark accreditation and receive guidance from the local Early Years Development and Childcare partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn to follow good personal hygiene routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet and before snacks and lunch. Children's health is well maintained because practitioners have relevant first aid training and know how to effectively deal with accidents. Accidents are being recorded separately for each child, which ensures confidentiality. Detailed procedures are in place to administer medication and records are shared effectively with parents ensuring children stay healthy. Young children's physical needs are well met as practitioners work with parents to ensure consistency around nappy changing and toilet training.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy healthy snacks which they prepare themselves, and drinks from the snack station, which is available for children to come to throughout the session. The staff take account of the wishes of parents and have a clear record of any allergies or medical conditions as well as any dietary requirements to ensure all the children have appropriate and suitable meals. Lunch boxes, which parents provide, are suitably stored. Staff liaise well with parents, ensuring that any children's special dietary requirements are appropriately met.

Children participate enthusiastically in physical activities, in and outside on a daily basis, helping them to gain an understanding of the importance of taking regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They develop their climbing and balancing skills using a range of apparatus. They show good co-ordination and spatial awareness when riding bicycles and scooters. Children enjoy participating in practises for their forthcoming Sports Day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a very good range of safety measures, for example, radiator covers, fire blanket and extinguishers and a fully secure outdoor play area. They develop a good awareness of safety through practising emergency evacuations. Staff deployment is very good and guarantees children are well supervised and safe at the majority of the time. However, visitors are not always asked to sign into the older children's nursery on arrival or departure. Sensitive reminders such as requests to remember to use equipment appropriately or not running in the setting, are reinforced through praising positive behaviour, for instance, 'That was a nice walk, well done'; this increases children's awareness of everyday safety in the setting. Children have visits from the fire brigade and police and have had topics on road safety to ensure children have very good opportunities to develop their own awareness of protecting themselves in the wider community. Formal and informal risk assessments are implemented ensuring potential hazards are removed.

Secure systems are in place to ensure children leave with adults who are known to practitioners and written details are obtained from parents regarding who can and cannot collect their child, which contributes to ensuring children's safety. Children have access to a good range of Montessori equipment, resources and materials which are safe and suitable for their use. The

furniture and storage shelves are of child height and size. The resources are organised so children can access them easily and develop independence in their play and daily activities.

Children are well protected and safeguarded from harm because practitioners have a secure knowledge of their roles and responsibilities regarding protecting children in their care. They know how to implement local child protection procedures and ensure parents are fully informed about their role with regards to child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children immensely enjoy their time spent at the setting. Children are content and self-assured because there is an ethos of respect for each child's space and choice of activities. Play and learning is mainly child-led as children can self-select resources and make their own choice of activities. Practitioners offer support during focused activities and interact with children to enhance their learning when appropriate, but they do not disrupt or dominate their play. Many children show a high level of competence in self-learning strategies. They know exactly where the equipment is and fetch it for satisfying free play. When they have finished they feel responsible to return the equipment to the same place so that other children can also access them easily. Many children care for their own personal needs well, for example, regarding toileting and hand washing. They are also independent with snack and lunch time routines.

The setting has devised an extremely good system based on Montessori methods and the Foundation Stage of learning to record the progress of the children attending. Practitioners observe children's progress whilst interacting with them at all times. This ensures children's progress is closely monitored and their learning is encouraged on an individual basis. Practitioners have an exceptional understanding of the Foundation Stage which they have translated very well, in planning and providing a thorough Montessori curriculum. This is further enhanced by planning around the Birth to three matters framework for younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children learn from staff very early on about the ground rules for behaviour and how to use the various resources for their learning appropriately, with consideration for others. Practitioners set up high-quality Montessori and other learning resources in a methodical and very accessible manner. This leads to an extremely calm, orderly, yet challenging and stimulating environment, conducive to children's self-exploratory learning.

Practitioners demonstrate exceptional understanding of the Montessori approach and Foundation Stage of learning. There are outstanding practices in teaching, which impact on children's rapid progress in areas of learning, for example, about the wider world and environment. Children are excited about exploring nature and living things through sensory and concrete experience, for example, investigating real bird nests, bark and fir cones, following the life cycle of a frog and butterfly and looking at mini beasts with magnifying glasses and microscopes. Practitioners reinforce children's learning about different countries of the world with reference books, maps, pictures, a globe, and genuine artefacts. Children recognise the main continents as they are marked on a colour coded globe. They are then encouraged to colour in flags of countries.

Practitioners use their time exceptionally well to interact with and support children. For example, they challenge children to think during the making of a birthday cake. Practitioners use extensive

age-appropriate language and methods to develop children's grasp of time passing and difficult scientific concepts. For example, for children's birthdays they are asked to walk with the 'earth' symbolised by a globe around the sun. Each round is then explained as the passing of one year of the child's life, and supported by photographs of the child growing up.

Many children initiate conversation and eagerly volunteer information in a confident manner because staff attentively listen to and respect their ideas. Children at the playdough table talk clearly about their three dimensional planets that they have made and the aliens that live on them. Many of the children are confident speakers, and are at ease at socialising during play or snack and lunch time. During large group times, children always listen attentively to stories, or take turns in speaking.

Practitioners provide a wide selection of books which appeal to children. When exploring topics about the wider world, children are shown that information books and reference materials, such as pictures and diagrams, convey exciting new knowledge for them. Practitioners routinely read stories and share books with children, so children visit the book corner to use books for their own pleasure. Practitioners have a clear extensive knowledge about how to use the phonetic system to introduce the alphabet to children. As a result, children make exceptional progress in recognising many phonetic sounds, such as those of their names; and in reading and word building. Children routinely make marks on their own work; some children are enthusiastic about writing their own names. Practitioners regularly encourage children to count, so many can count up to or beyond 10, as well as compare numbers, for example, of girls and boys when they line up to go outside. Good quality wooden construction and mathematical resources encourage children to arrange graded wooden blocks or rods in order of size or length to develop concepts about size, shape and pattern.

On registration, practitioners find out through parents their children's stage of development, interests and needs, so that these can be built on to help the children achieve their potential. Practitioners are extremely pro-active in supporting children with additional needs. They respect their preference and include them in everyday activities in a sensitive manner. The practitioners are all exceptionally experienced and take their task of nurturing and educating young children very seriously. They know how children learn and the best ways to motivate and challenge them to think and develop. Practitioners are familiar with all the children and are perceptive about their needs and interests. They regularly observe, record and assess children's achievements; they plan experiences that extend their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children thrive in an atmosphere where staff nurture and support children making them feel valued as individuals. The children and the staff show respect, consideration and care for themselves and each other. Staff value children's input, listen to them and respond showing interest and concern. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. There are good systems in place to support children with additional needs and children for whom English is an additional language. Children's behaviour is very good, they share and take turns and have a developing sense of right and wrong. The children have a good level of independence, freely selecting equipment for themselves and taking responsibility for their personal care.

Practitioners have a good knowledge and understanding of children's individual home and family circumstances, and relationships are enhanced because of the effective implementation

of the deployment of practitioners in the setting. Children benefit greatly from the strong relationships between practitioners and parents securing the links between home and the provision. Effective and flexible induction and settling in procedures enable parents to share information about their child and to feel at ease in the group. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents speak highly of the group and appreciate the care and attention given to their children. Parents have a comprehensive range of information on the children's activities through notice boards, newsletters and daily diaries for the younger children. Parents are welcome to look at their child's records at any time. Systems to ensure parents are kept fully informed about their child's ongoing progress towards the early learning goals are fully developed. Practitioners identify children's individual next steps in their learning which is shared with parents, enabling them to help to support this in the home, which contributes to their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised and efficiently run provision. Practitioners are well deployed and are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. As a result of this the children are secure and settled. Practitioners are qualified and three are very experienced teachers, they receive good induction when joining the setting and are encouraged to train and attend short courses to develop and enhance their knowledge and understanding of childcare and education. Unvetted adults who may visit the setting do not have unsupervised contact with the children. The manager has developed an effective operational plan, and a good range of policies and procedures, which are relevant to the setting. Most are used to ensure all children's safety, wellbeing and confidentiality.

Leadership and management is good. All practitioners have a secure knowledge of how to successfully promote children's learning. Highly effective systems are in place to plan and evaluate the educational programme, and how this is delivered. However the practice of publishing the full names of children in their key worker groups on the external walls of the nursery does not maintain confidentiality of children attending. Practitioner's enthusiasm and belief in their role as early educators enhances the wonderful opportunities children receive and the individual progress they make during their time at the setting. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure visitors to the setting are asked to sign in and out on arrival and departure

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure information displayed about children on the external walls of the nursery is kept confidential

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk