

# College Fields Montessori Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	146048
<b>Inspection date</b>	29/01/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Rachel Edwards
<b>Setting address</b>	College Fields, MARLBOROUGH, Wiltshire, SN8 1UA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01672 515486
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

## 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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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.

## **Description of the setting**

The College Fields Montessori Nursery School moved to the present site, near to Marlborough Leisure Centre, in 1992. The nursery operates from its own timber, single storey building, which provides one large play room, kitchen and toilet facilities. It serves the local area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 24 children aged from two to under eight years old, at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week for 48 weeks of the year. Session times are 09.00 to 12.15/13.15, 12.15/13.15 to 15.30, or all day from 09.15 until 15.30. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There is a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. The setting is in receipt of free nursery education funding for three and four year olds. There are currently 42 children in the early years age range on roll. Although none currently attend, the group supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The owner plus three members of staff work with the children. The owner has Early Years Professional Status and all staff hold a range of appropriate qualifications including some with Montessori teaching diplomas. In addition one member of staff is working towards an early years degree.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision at College Fields Montessori Nursery School is good. Children are happy and purposefully occupied during their time at this nursery. They make very good progress in all areas of their development as staff recognise and cherish the individuality of each child. Staff are very good role models as they guide children's personal development and encourage their natural curiosity and wonder through a range of interesting and imaginative experiences. Children's welfare and safety is given a very high priority. Staff are generally successful in recognising what they do well and areas for development and they continually strive to further improve the already high quality care and learning for all their children.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- further develop the outdoor play area to routinely cover all areas of the curriculum, throughout the year; explore ways to allow children greater freedom to move between indoors and outdoors
- encourage staff to interact more, when appropriate, with children during free play to extend their learning

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

- ensure that medication records include the date that it is administered (Promoting good health) 12/02/2009
- ensure records are kept of the information used to assess staff suitability, including the issue date and reference numbers of Criminal Record Bureau disclosures (Suitability of adults) 12/02/2009

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The nursery is effectively led by the owner and well supported by her dedicated and experienced team of staff. All of the policies and procedures that are needed for the smooth running of the nursery are in place and regularly reviewed. However, evidence that appropriate checks have been carried out for all the staff are not available for inspection, as is required and the date that medication is administered is not recorded.

The owner and staff are highly reflective in all that they do. They look critically at their practice and successfully identify strengths and have clearly identified targets for further improvement. All adults are well qualified and the owner has Early Years Professional Status. Several staff also hold Montessori qualifications. There is a very strong commitment to ongoing training. The nursery shares aspects of good practice with others. For example, following a visit to observe another setting, it has plans to further develop the outdoor area to give children greater freedom to play outside with a wider choice of activities.

The nursery has excellent partnerships with parents and others. Parents are kept very well informed about all aspects of the nursery and their children's progress. The use of email has allowed regular updates with photographs and videos to be sent home and this has been especially valuable in involving parents with their child's learning. Parents are encouraged to send in 'wow' slips so that children's special achievements at home can be shared with staff and friends in the nursery. This helps build strong links and makes children feel good about themselves. The nursery also organises interest evenings for parents, for example on first aid or the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents speak very highly of the nursery and of the quality of care and learning their children receive. There are effective relationships with other professionals, such as School Start and speech therapists and staff work closely with other settings that children attend or schools they are moving on to, to ensure consistency in their care and education.

Risk assessments are frequently carried out for all areas used by the children and good procedures are followed to promote children's health and safety. Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding children's welfare and are shortly to attend training to update their knowledge of child protection.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children are confident, happy and settled at this small and welcoming nursery. The staff demonstrate a very good knowledge of child development and have effectively combined the learning requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage with the Montessori approach. Children are at the centre of all that is done, and the environment is organised to encourage their independence both in learning and self care skills. This enables children to follow their own interests and learn at their own pace, including more able children, without interruption; they are able to concentrate very well. Staff support children's learning effectively, especially during adult led activities, when they encourage children to question why and how and extend their learning.

The nursery provides a stimulating learning environment where high quality resources cover all areas of learning. These are well presented on low level storage units and open shelves, which encourage children to select their own materials and take responsibility for putting them away after they have finished with them. This high level of independence prepares them well for later life at primary school. Staff carefully record children's interests, preferred learning styles and monitor their progress. They routinely discuss children's achievements with parents and use all this information to build an accurate picture of each child. This helps staff plan for each child's next steps in learning and also helps them quickly identify those who may need additional support. The high ratio of staff to children ensures that children receive good levels of individual attention. This contributes to their sense of self worth and of being a valued member of the nursery.

Children behave very well at nursery. Staff are quick to intervene when necessary but they also give children space to try and resolve minor disputes themselves, which children manage well. A real strength is how staff treat the children and others with respect and kindness. They are very good role models and children quickly learn to play co-operatively and show an awareness and concern for others.

Staff support children's communication skills very well, including those who speak English as a second language. For example, dual language books are lent to their parents to help familiarise children with the story and involve their parents in their learning. Children chat during snack times and negotiate story lines in the role play area, for example, 'let's go this way to China'. They are able to follow quite complex instructions, listen very attentively and sit peacefully, such as during the 'quiet game' at the end of each session. High quality resources help children to gain a phonic awareness and when ready to start to build simple words. Children make very good progress with their problem solving and numeracy skills. They can confidently sort and sequence by volume, weight and size. They begin to learn to add and subtract, for example, as they sing 'five green bottles'.

Children enjoy playing outside and during the warmer weather, they can play out in the smaller yard area at any time, where staff provide a range of activities across most areas of the curriculum. They do not have free access at all times to the main garden area, where there is room to run and play boisterously. However,

children do use the garden every day, where they develop strength and control through meaningful activities, such as digging and tending the plants they grow and making dens with a variety of materials, such as large logs and tarpaulins. These activities also allow them to learn about safety, for example as they discover the balancing planks are slippery when wet. The children do not have access to larger climbing equipment or wheeled toys to further help develop large muscle control.

Children learn to respect their own and other cultures and differences in the way we all live. These are reflected in the resources children play with and through discussion and planned activities. For example, a child proudly told the group how they had learnt and performed a traditional fan dance at a Chinese New Year celebration. Staff quickly helped all the children make paper fans so they could join in with celebrating her achievement. This is a good example of how staff spontaneously follow children's interests so that learning has real meaning.

Children are encouraged to be healthy and are offered fruit and nutritious snacks at break times and water is freely available. They help to grow, harvest and cook fruit and vegetables in the nursery garden and this develops their understanding of healthy eating. Adults help children to stay safe. Children learn about safety, for example, at circle times they talk about the dangers of water or talking to strangers. They sometimes go into town, for example, to visit the fish counter at the supermarket and they use these outings to reinforce road safety messages.

## 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*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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](http://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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.