

Christchurch Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY136941
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Inspector Anne Mitchell

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Type of setting 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 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.

Description of the setting

Christchurch Montessori Day Nursery has been registered since 2002. It operates from a large hall and smaller room in a scout hut, close to Christchurch town centre. The nursery serves the local area. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, as well as the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A total of 44 children from two years of age until the end of the early years may attend at any one time. There are currently 65 children on roll. Of these, 45 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties as well as children for whom English is an additional language.

The playgroup opens five days a week, for 48 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 08:00-17:30. Five members of staff work directly with the children. Of these, three hold early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the advisory teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and uses the Montessori method of teaching.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals and enjoy their time at the setting. Staff know the children well and meet their needs and encourage their interests. The setting demonstrates a capacity to improve through reviewing their practice and addressing areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop children's development records to involve parents' comments and to ensure plans reflect their individual interests and enthusiasms.
- continue to ensure children's home language is valued and supported whilst developing meaningful context in which children have opportunities to develop English
- ensure that parents are provided with information about the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum to enable more effective partnership working.

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

- ensure Ofsted is notified of any change to the person who is managing the early years provision (Suitable people)

10/07/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that support children's health and wellbeing which are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Regular risk assessments ensure children are safe and secure and a daily checklist identifies potential hazards.

There are secure systems to recruit and vet staff to ensure adults caring for children are suitable to do so. The secure induction procedures ensures all staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities from the outset. However, the registered person has failed to inform the regulator about changes to management, which is a legal requirement.

Staff demonstrate a commitment to continued training, through in-house and external training courses. Resources are in good condition and are stored at children's level to enable children to make choices in their play. Staff recognise the need to provide additional resources for children to develop their imaginative skills from an early age, and have developed a role play and dressing up area within the setting accessible to all children. Good use is made of the outside area with gardening areas, imaginative play, music and physical play equipment.

Systems to monitor and assess the provision are effective. Recommendations from the last inspection have been met, although they continue to work to improve their partnership with parents and carers. The management discuss areas for improvement with staff at regular meetings and seek their views. Daily practice is monitored and reviewed and improvements have been made. Recent parent questionnaires have involved parents in the evaluation process. Staff take account of the support visits from the local Early Years and have actioned many of the areas for improvement.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress through informal discussion at their convenience. Parents of younger children are provided with a daily diary sheet, and all parents receive regular newsletters. Information evenings are planned to provide parents and carers with additional information about the Montessori method of education. However, few parents have been made aware of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The systems to ensure children are safeguarded are successful because many staff have attended training and are clear about signs and symptoms of possible abuse. They are clear about effective procedures to follow in the event of any concerns being noted. Parents are provided with the setting's safeguarding policy from the outset to make them aware of the staff's responsibility to protect children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are settled and confident in the setting, and those who are less certain at the start of the day are soon supported by caring staff. An adult quickly notices a

child who appears a little lost, and immediately engages him in discussion, shows him the Lego train and gently encourages him to join in with others. He soon settles and becomes involved in play. Children demonstrate high levels of concentration from an early age. Much of the Montessori equipment is self correcting so children can use it independently from an early age. Staff are skilled at providing effective support for children who need it and enable them to try tasks independently when they are able. Good interaction and open ended questioning encourages children to solve problems, develop language skills and vocabulary. A member of staff engages children in shape recognition. They recognise the bean bag shapes, talk about the colours and what might be inside. The adult helps a child to recognise a rectangle by explaining 'It's a little bit like a square but longer!' The activity is very well presented to the younger children who show real interest.

The learning environment helps children progress well towards the early learning goals because staff take time to organise the child friendly environment before children arrive. Resources are available at child height to promote choices in their play, and they enjoy a relaxed environment. Children use sand letters to explore letter shapes with their fingers, then write in shallow sand tray. One child holds the sand letter so other children can see, and is praised by staff for being helpful. Children take a pride in their environment, cleaning up spills and enjoying Montessori polishing and cleaning activities. They create imaginative paintings and staff praise their achievements. One child paints a bright portrait of her mother, and proudly describes her clothes and hair to an adult. Systems to support children for whom English is an additional language include the use of pictorial timetables and individual attention. However, not enough information is sought regarding key words to help them settle from the outset.

Learning journeys include planned observations and photos to build a picture of each child's progress, although these do not currently include comments from parents. Additional spontaneous observations are completed to add to additional records on children's progress in early writing and number skill. Planning focuses on whole groups of children, not on children's individual interests, although these are taken into account during free play activities. For example, a child shows a close interest in dinosaurs so the member of staff supports him, providing toys and a dinosaur book. The child compares the pictures to the models. They then talk about where they lived, looking at the globe to identify the country.

Children's health and safety is well promoted. Staff remind them about keeping safe, reminding them to tuck chairs in so they do not get in the way, and people do not walk into them. Children are quick to mop up spilt water to ensure others do not slip. Children eat healthily and follow good hygiene routines. They automatically choose a sun hat to wear in the garden and tell the adult 'You must wear a hat in sunny weather to stop you from burning and getting a headache'. Children enjoy daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise in the garden, although these sessions are timetabled.

Children are polite and well mannered, spontaneously saying 'please' and 'thank you'. They are eager to help and, following the Montessori methods, put equipment away after using it. They are keen to help each other. A child fetches a second drink of water for her friend, carefully carrying both cups to where her

friend is sitting. Staff praise her for being kind and helpful. Staff's positive and consistent attitude to children promotes a culture of respect.

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

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

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	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?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

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