

Eastbourne Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY387557
Inspection date	23/06/2009
Inspector	Alison Weaver
Setting address	United Reform Church, Watts Lane, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 1NP
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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

Eastbourne Montessori School opened at the current premises in 2008. It operates from a room within the United Reform Church in a residential area of Eastbourne. The setting has access to one first floor room with toilet facilities and a kitchen on the ground floor. They also have use of a hall on the ground floor for some of the time. There is easy access to the ground floor for wheelchair users but not for the first floor. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Opening times are from 08.30 to 15.00. All children share access to a small, enclosed outdoor area.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 16 children may attend at any one time. There are currently eight children on roll in the early years age range. The provision also offers care to children aged over five years to six years. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs two staff. The manager holds an appropriate early years qualification. The setting uses the Montessori method of teaching.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children's welfare needs are effectively met as there are good procedures to ensure they stay safe and healthy. Staff successfully promote each child's learning and development although have not fully developed the opportunities for parents to become involved. Those children needing additional support are helped to achieve by staff forming good links with their parents and agencies. The setting is in the early stages of evaluating the provision in order to help improve outcomes for children but they have a realistic view of their weaknesses and take steps to address these.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the use of observational evidence to support the formal assessment system and identify next steps for children's individual learning that are more clearly linked to the expectations of the early learning goals
- improve the written information given to parents and develop more opportunities for them to contribute to children's learning and development.

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

- ensure that the role and full details of the regulatory body are included in the complaints procedure

29/06/2009

- (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)
- maintain an accurate daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance (Documentation).

25/06/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are good and all staff are aware of the correct procedures for reporting any concerns. The owner carries out robust recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Effective risk assessments are carried out and reviewed as needed to help ensure the premises and equipment are safe. This enables children to move around independently and stay free from harm. The majority of the required documentation is well maintained. However, the record of attendance does not always meet the legal requirement. This is a breach of regulations but has minimal impact on the care of children.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. The introductory prospectus for new parents gives very limited information about the setting and what they offer children and parents. There is a file of written policies and procedures for parents and staff to help inform them about the setting. In general the policies are satisfactory although some of them are not specific to the setting and the file is not well organised. A few policies lack the necessary detail, for example, the complaints procedure does not meet the regulation. However, this has no direct effect on the care of children.

Parents are very happy with the care provided and the friendliness of the setting. They are kept informed about their child on a largely informal basis. However, regular formal meetings are held for parents where they can see the learning records and discuss their child's progress. There are some opportunities for parents to contribute to children's learning and development although these are not fully promoted. The setting communicates closely with parents who have children with additional needs. They also work well with agencies to give these children the appropriate support and care.

The overall organisation of the setting and the use of the resources are good and meet the needs of all children. They are well-supervised at all times by supportive and skilled staff. The staff team works well together and communicate effectively. Ongoing training is encouraged to continually improve their skills and knowledge. They are committed to improving the provision for children. The staff are addressing some of the weaknesses they have identified, for example, the outdoor area. However, currently there is no systematic way of monitoring and evaluating the provision.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff create a warm and friendly environment where children are well supported and cared for. They build good relationships with the children and are skilled at extending their knowledge and learning. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and enjoy their time in the setting. Children with additional needs are fully included and staff strive to ensure their needs are met. Staff regularly observe what children do and achieve, so that they can plan for each child's continuing development, although the links with the elements in the areas of learning are not always clearly identified. Staff get to know the children well; however, there is not always sufficient formal observational evidence to back their assessment of children's progress.

Children learn to play with each other, as well as independently. They develop a good awareness of the needs of others as they take turns and help each other. Children behave well and respond positively to instructions. Children's independence is effectively promoted in ways such as making their own choices from the easily accessible safe and suitable resources and then putting them away when they are finished with. They have the freedom to explore and investigate the different equipment available. They show very good fine motor control. Children show an interest in the activities and concentrate well, becoming absorbed in their 'work'. They are given the time to complete activities before joining in with a group time.

There are many opportunities for children to do problem solving and develop an understanding of numbers, size and shape. They are very confident speakers and are developing a good understanding of the link between sounds and letters. Their mark making skills are promoted in a number of ways and several children are able to form letters correctly. Children enjoy a variety of creative activities although there are fewer opportunities for them to take part in imaginary play. They enjoy exploring the natural world and are fascinated by the bugs in the pots of plants they are growing outside. They use the magnifiers to look closely at what they find.

Children eat healthy snacks and are able to help themselves to drinks when they are thirsty. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene. Their awareness of safety is developing well as staff teach them how to use equipment safely. The children also take part in fire drills and learn about stranger danger. Before going on outings they practise road safety and how to keep themselves safe.

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.	3

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?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
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

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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 29/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept). 25/06/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 29/06/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept). 25/06/2009