

# Orpington Montessori Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY387353  
**Inspection date** 03/06/2009  
**Inspector** Susan Linda Capon

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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**

Orpington Montessori Pre-School was registered in 2008. It is one of two pre-schools privately owned by Natural Learners Limited. The pre-school is based in a church hall in the Orpington Methodist Church situated in the London Borough of Bromley. Children access a large hall and outdoor play area with associated toilets. The ethos of the provision is Montessori based.

The pre-school is registered for a maximum of 32 children in the early years age range at any one time. Of these, no more than eight children may be under three years old. There are currently 47 children on roll. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.15 during term time. Children attending come from the local community and for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school supports children with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The pre-school has a team of six staff, including the provider, with five working at the setting each day. Of these, four hold a relevant childcare qualification. The provider has an Early Years Professional Status qualification. There are two staff currently studying for a relevant childcare qualification and the deputy leader is currently studying for her Foundation Degree in Early Years.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. The strong, dedicated staff team provide an innovative, interesting, stimulating programme of activities every day, ensuring children are occupied and involved throughout the session. All the staff fully implement the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) programme in the setting, enabling every child to develop and progress through the early learning goals to reach their personal potential. Inclusive practice is fully promoted through a mixed staff team and children attend from a wide variety of backgrounds. A wide range of activities, promoting knowledge and understanding of other people and the world about them, are incorporated into the group's plans. Extensive risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor play areas, toys and equipment provided, ensure the children's safety at all times. The staff's ability to evaluate their practices fully and undertake regular additional training opportunities, demonstrate the group's ability to continue to develop and progress as they provide high quality care for the children and their parents. All the staff continue to develop excellent relationships with all parents, taking their personal views into consideration at all times.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to develop the ongoing plans to improve and develop the outdoor play area.
- review the use of whole group activities, ensuring all children's individual needs are fully met at all times.

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

The provider and her hard working staff provide a quality childcare provision for children, based on the Montessori philosophy. Staff work well together, supporting one another as they move around the setting each session. In-depth policies and procedures, fully implemented by the staff team, ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the pre-school. Extensive additional training undertaken by the staff, improving their childcare skills and practices, ensures the children receive appropriate care at all times. All the children are well safeguarded through the rigorous employment checks, ensuring all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with the children. Excellent induction procedures for new staff, volunteers and parent helpers enables everyone to be clear of their personal role and responsibilities within the group. Children are never left alone with un-vetted persons, ensuring their personal safety at all times.

The pre-school has developed excellent self-evaluation procedures, enabling staff to identify areas for continuous improvement and development. The team has clear ideas of how to continue to develop their provision in the future. For example, they intend to improve the garden area and would like to be able to offer free-flow play indoors and outdoors each day. The staff work extremely hard to ensure every child and their family feels welcome and included in the provision. Excellent systems are in place to support all children with English as an additional language and those with a learning difficulty or disability. For example, Makaton signs and signing during some activities ensure all children can be fully involved. Individual educational plans enable children to progress and develop at their personal rate with the help and support of other professionals when required.

The pre-school team have worked hard to develop strong relationships with all parents. Parents find the staff warm, welcoming, friendly and approachable. They are pleased with the wide variety of resources and the independence skills their children are developing. Others feel staff make them feel as if the setting has been organised especially for their child. Staff greet everyone warmly by name, making them feel welcome and part of the group. Quality information, regarding the group's weekly activities and parent events, enables all parents to be fully involved in their child's learning and development. A parent representative is available for parents to share their views, suggestions and ideas about the provision.

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

The staff team work very hard, making the premises their own each day, as they lay out an extensive range of toys, equipment and activities for the children to explore. Children proudly show their parents their displayed artwork, developing their individual self-esteem and confidence.

The children's welfare and safety is paramount to all the staff. A high adult to child staff ratio is available each day, ensuring children are fully supervised when they enjoy indoor and outdoor activities. Staff ensure the premises are safe and secure at all times. They escort children to the toilets outside the main hall as the church premises are used by other people on a regular basis. Regular head counts as children move around the premises ensures no child leaves the premises unnoticed.

Children are developing an excellent awareness of being healthy. They enjoy the fresh fruit they bring for their snack each day, supplemented by fresh milk or water. Staff are fully aware of specific dietary needs, ensuring these are adhered to and taken into consideration at all times. For example, staff check with parents when offering a cooking or food tasting activity. Excellent opportunities for developing their independence skills are incorporated into snack time as children decide when to take their snack, can cut up their fruit with the available knife, pour their own drinks and clear away their dirty beakers. Regular opportunities for outdoor play are incorporated into the group's programme of activities. Children enjoy climbing, jumping and sliding, using the climbing apparatus or kicking a ball and driving the play vehicles.

The staff team are all fully conversant with the EYFS curriculum, effectively incorporating it into their daily routine. Regular observations on all the children help staff develop a suitable programme of activities, including every child's needs appropriately. Extensive evaluation of the daily activities and specific focus activities enables staff to check if the plans meet each child's personal needs. Staff know all the children well. Information is initially gathered from parents when children first attend the group, enabling them to build on children's abilities appropriately. Ongoing assessment plans enable staff and parents to work together, helping children develop and progress through the early learning goals.

Children are making very good progress through the early learning goals with some exceeding their age and stage of development. For example, some children can read simple text. Several can write their own names using recognisable letters. Staff support children appropriately as they sit at their level, encouraging them to think about the activities as they discuss what they are doing. For example, using small objects to encourage phonics recognition, enabling children to use letters to make up the words. The majority of activities ensure all the children are included at their own level. However, occasionally whole group activities do not always meet the personal needs of some younger children attending.

Children eagerly enter the pre-school each day, keen to play and explore the activities available. Daily opportunities to explore natural materials are thoroughly

enjoyed by all. For example, children discuss the smell and texture of the seaweed and shells in the water tray or whisk bubbles into the water. They enjoy mixing water with dry potato, recognising when they need to add more to make it smooth. Children shout with glee when they manage the zips, buttons and buckles or match the zoo animals, forming the different families. Opportunities to make their own models at the art and craft table enables children to explore different types of materials, using their skills to fix them securely together. Children enjoy making new colours as they mix the paint, presenting their personal masterpiece to their parents at the end of the session. Stories are a huge favourite with all the children as they sit alone or with an adult to look at the wide variety of books. They enthusiastically predict what happens next as they listen intently to 'Where Are You Blue Kangaroo?'. Children enjoyed meeting the ducks who visited them recently. They particularly enjoy singing songs and rhymes, doing the actions as they move, for example, 'Five Little Monkeys'. These activities also encourage simple addition and subtraction skills as they play. Staff have developed children's awareness of the importance of good listening as they enjoy whole group activities, enabling everyone to be involved. Regular discussions about what makes up happy and sad, enables children to discuss feelings in a safe environment and develop an awareness of the needs of others. All the children behave well as the staff implement the clear consistent group rules. Staff quietly remind younger children they must share the toys and equipment as they play.

## 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>	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

### Leadership and management

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

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	1
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
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?	1

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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