

Blue Skies Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY367125

Inspection date

28/09/2009

Inspector

Susan Lyon

Setting address

Frankton Road, Whitefield, Manchester, M45 7FB

Telephone number

01617 678100

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Blue Skies Montessori Nursery was registered in 2008 to provide full day care for 34 children. The nursery is housed in a single-storey building in Manchester and consists of three play rooms and an outdoor play area. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 5.45pm all year. There are five members of staff, four of whom are qualified. The provision is also registered by Ofsted on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 22 children on roll. The setting supports children with English as an additional language.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and create a rich learning environment. Children are happy, settled and eager to join in activities. Observation and assessment arrangements are in place to help children progress. Children's safety and welfare is promoted well. All children are included and their individual needs met effectively. Teamwork is a strength and the setting demonstrates a strong capacity to continually improve the service provided.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- include more detail in observations in order to clearly identify the next steps in children's learning
- ensure outings are included in written risk assessments in order to keep children safe

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare is promoted well through daily and weekly safety checks to the premises inside and out, and yearly risk assessments to the building and outings, although the assessment of outings is not always written. Several safety measures are in place to create a safe and secure environment. For example, socket covers, radiator guards and a visitors' book is used. The emergency escape plan is in place and practised regularly with children contributing to their safety whilst on the premises. Space and resources are organised effectively to allow all children to move around freely and safely. All documentation is in place to ensure the safe and efficient management of the provision. For example, a policy for children lost and a collection policy is in place. Furthermore, the daily register is maintained and all staff have a valid first aid certificate.

Children are protected well through the majority of staff being qualified and all staff being vetted. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures,

are clear about the designated person for child protection and have all attended training. Strong emphasis is placed on key working to meet the individual needs of children, liaise with parents and help new children settle.

Staff are deployed well and respond to children's needs promptly and sensitively. The manager leads the staff team well through daily and weekly meetings and yearly appraisals to discuss training and development needs. Through her enthusiasm and motivation the manager inspires the staff through acting as a positive role model. Teamwork is a strength due to good communication and allocating areas of responsibility through recognising individual skills. Management and staff demonstrate strong capacity to continually improve the service and drive improvement through evaluating practices and completing the self-evaluation form in order to identify areas of strength and weakness. For example, recently play resources reflecting equal opportunities have been increased, and an 'all about me' form has been introduced to obtain information from parents regarding children's individual needs. These improvements enhance the care and enjoyment of children whilst at the setting. Feedback is sought from parents through sending out questionnaires and asking parents if they are happy with the care. Furthermore, staff are well supported to attend ongoing training to increase their knowledge and skills, such as food hygiene, child protection and first aid.

A 'working in partnership with parents' policy states the importance of parents being happy as well as children. Parents value staff working with them at particular times, such as potty training in order to provide consistency for the child. Parents are welcomed into the setting and are at ease talking to staff. Parents are involved in children's learning and development through daily chats and the sharing of observation files. New parents receive a wealth of information, such as policies, menus, activity play plans and the registration certificate is clearly displayed. Relevant information regarding the uniqueness of each child is obtained from parents, such as religion, likes, dislikes, family members and pets. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents and recorded on registration forms including health and dietary needs.

The provision has established good links with local schools and nurseries providing the Early Years Foundation Stage framework through visits and sharing information in order to ensure progression and continuity of care and learning. Children benefit greatly from the setting working closely with other agencies, such as the visual impairment team, in order to ensure progress is consistent for all children. All children are included in activities through staff changing or adapting the way play is provided to suit all levels of ability. Children feel a sense of belonging as their photographs are displayed around the rooms and children collect their name cards to register themselves into the setting. In addition to accessible resources, the building and learning environment is suitable for all as it is on the ground floor level, has an adapted toilet and wide doorways.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff help children to learn by spending time talking to them and skilfully asking them questions to make them think. For example, they ask 'where is the red circle?' and 'what colour are bananas?' Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and provide a rich learning environment covering different areas of learning, such as construction, imaginative, role play, mark making and books. Children are assertive and self-assured as they approach the inspector and confidently say 'hello'. They respond well to simple instructions, such as 'let's make a circle' as they sit on the carpet. Children know that print carries meaning as lots of words and letters are displayed indicating the contents of toy boxes. Children show curiosity and explore the environment with interest as they collect leaves, conkers and acorns. They show great excitement as they play with small world figures, shouting 'we're playing pirates, boats and princesses'. Children know how to operate simple equipment as they ably click the mouse and press the keyboard on toy laptops.

Children frequently seek to do things for themselves, such as washing and drying their hands. They select and use activities and resources independently as they are all easily accessible and children take great pleasure in visiting the bathroom unaided. Children use number names accurately during play as they easily count to four. Children begin to develop an awareness of groups of things changing in quantity as staff say 'you have three pieces left' when completing a puzzle. Children love to be outdoors as they run out excitedly to play. They move in a range of ways, such as running, balancing, pedalling and kicking balls. Children are skilled at negotiating pathways while riding scooters outside. Children use imagination in art as they create collage pictures and paintings using brushes and hands. They make three-dimensional structures using large and small bricks and play alongside other children well using small world figures.

Children freely explore the environment and engage well in activities of their choice. At times they benefit from adult-led activities, such as circle time for singing and stories. Young children develop their senses through exploring a range of different textures, shells and wooden objects. Staff find out what children can do on entry to the setting and ensure each child makes progress and achieves through observation and assessment arrangements. Staff record what children can do although the information is, at times, too general to clearly identify the next steps in their learning hindering children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff help children to learn to keep themselves safe through appropriate discussions regarding stranger danger and road safety. Staff often talk to children about 'not running inside in case you fall'. Children show they feel safe as they move around confidently both inside and out. They benefit from fresh air and exercise every day and enjoy using umbrellas if it is raining. An exclusion policy in place and use of paper towels help prevent the spread of infection. Appropriate action is taken if children are ill and children understand the importance of washing hands as staff explain 'it is to get rid of germs'. Children understand how

to lead healthy lifestyles through making healthy choices at meal and snack times, such as fruit, pasta and vegetables. Water is freely available throughout the day keeping their bodies healthy and hydrated.

Staff treat children with great kindness and consideration, and as a result children are happy and settled. They enjoy positive relationships with each other and staff and are eager to play and join in activities. Through a good range of art and craft materials children develop their imagination and creativity, thus promoting their sense of achievement and enjoyment. For example, they make ladybirds from paper plates and owls using cotton wool. Children feel pride in their achievements as they enjoy taking home the results of planting and growing in the vegetable garden. Children respect differences through staff talking to them about people who are different in order to promote awareness and understanding. For example, the theme 'our world' involves lots of discussions about other countries, world maps and flags. Children use disabled play figures well to express their feelings, show interest and raise questions about people who are different. A good range of play resources help children become aware of the wider world, such as dual language books, welcome poster in other languages and black dolls.

Furthermore, diversity is valued through recognising festivals from other countries, such as talking about lights for Divali and making dragons and eating noodles for Chinese New Year. Children begin to know about their own cultures and those of others as parents are invited into the setting for baking activities or to make signs in their home language for displaying on the walls. Children are actively involved in making choices and decisions as the staff often ask them what they want to do. Children's behaviour is managed positively through clear boundaries and explanations contributing to their confidence and self-esteem. Children are prepared for transition from the setting to school through arranging visits and sharing of information. Overall, children are making good progress and developing skills for the future.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
------------------------------------------------------------------	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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:

Met