

# The Montessori Childrens House

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	110004
<b>Inspection date</b>	25/01/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Judith Reed
<b>Setting address</b>	Main Road, Kingsley, Bordon, Hampshire, GU35 9ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	01420 479000
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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## 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).

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.

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## **Description of the setting**

The Montessori Childrens House has been under the current ownership since 1999. It operates from within the Kingsley Centre in the centre of Kingsley, in north east Hampshire. Accommodation includes the main hall, an additional room for occasional use, and an outside play area. The nursery serves surrounding towns and villages. It opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are Monday 8:45am to 2:45pm; Tuesday 8:45am to 12:00pm; Thursday 8:45am to 2:45pm; and Friday 8:45am to 12:00pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 22 children on roll, from two years, six months to five years of age. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are five members of staff who work with the children. Of these, four staff members have Montessori qualifications, and one is receiving in-house training in Montessori methods. Children are organised and educated according to the principles of the Montessori teaching method.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children make sound progress in their learning and development appropriate to the Montessori philosophy where all children progress according to their individual potential. Equality and diversity are appropriately celebrated. Most areas of children's welfare are promoted, however, children are not always secure within the nursery and are therefore not fully safeguarded. The owner endeavours to ensure continuous improvement of the nursery and has a development plan.

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

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

- ensure children do not leave the premises unsupervised (Safeguarding and Welfare) 19/02/2010

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

- continue to develop outside play area to provide daily opportunities for all children to experience outside play
- ensure accurate times of attendance are recorded for both children and staff and the visitors book includes sufficient detail
- review risk assessment following incident and ensure exits and doors are included

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

A safeguarding policy is in place and staff are aware of their duties regarding child protection procedures. However, children are not fully safeguarded as they leave the nursery environment unaccompanied. Risk assessments are completed around the premises as well as for regular outings. However, these risk assessments do not include consideration of the risk of the open door at the beginning or end of the session, when children can escape from the nursery. The daily attendance register is not completed with accurate times of arrival and departure for children or staff, and the visitors book does not contain sufficient detail to ensure children and adults are protected at all times. The nursery owner ensures all necessary checks are completed on staff members and a suitable recruitment procedure is in place. Children feel safe as they are individually welcomed into the nursery by the owner and their personal possessions are valued. They also have their own bags of rest equipment including personal blankets, pillows and cuddly toys.

The owner of the nursery is beginning to make self-evaluation of the early years provision. She has attended training and collected views of both parents and the children. The self-evaluation has not been used to target future development and training according to the needs of the nursery.

The owner is committed to ongoing development and is currently working towards providing suitable outdoor play facilities for all children. The equipment and resources are very well organised and available to the children throughout the sessions. Staff move around the large nursery room as they are needed and support one another well. Children experience free choice of activities throughout most of the session and come together at the end of the morning for group time. Resources such as jigsaws and books reflect diversity and cultural issues are included in the curriculum through acknowledging festivals. Children are interested in the world and observe a globe and maps.

Partnerships with parents are good and the owner encourages new parents to visit the nursery with their children. The Montessori philosophy is briefly explained and children begin to explore the equipment. The owner also makes home visits to the family and finds out starting points for children's learning through discussion with parents, as well as a completed form. Staff build relationships with parents and as a result, children are happy and settled in a setting where their individual needs are met. Parents state that they are attracted by the philosophy of the nursery and they feel their children are busy and engaged in a well organised nursery with a quiet, calm atmosphere. They also feel their children are more sociable and their communication skills have improved. Parents view children's individual development records during parents' evenings and receive a termly, written report about their children. They communicate informally with the owner on a daily basis as the children arrive and leave. Parents feel staff are professional and they help children make the transition to school. The owner builds relationships with feeder schools and visits with the children and their parents. She takes photographs when at the school to use as a discussion aid when back at nursery. This helps children recall the environment, including the cloakroom and their classroom. Staff also

work closely with the area special needs coordinator. They support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and employ additional staff to support children when necessary. The owner supports families when they attend speech therapy appointments and ensures all children's ongoing development.

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

Children are busy and well occupied with the choice of activities and equipment available. Children move around the large room freely and help themselves to equipment arranged on the low level storage shelves. Staff are aware of each child's development or find out quickly from the observation folders. They encourage children to learn by providing an enabling environment. Children are active learners and learn from the environment as appropriate materials are provided. Planning is completed as a brief overview of the term and displayed for parents to see. The plans ensure all areas of development are included and children learn about different letters and sounds. For example, the letter of the week is 'P' and children are encouraged to bring an item from home linked to this letter. One child brought a wooden pot. During group time staff show children a range of food items beginning with the letter 'P' such as pineapple, pepper, pear, peach, plum, pasta, peanut butter, pomegranate, and parsley. They also show everyone the wooden pot. Staff write observations of children's learning in the observation folders. Several children's records are included in each folder and they are kept available at all times for staff to make quick reference. For example a member of staff checked the observation records to see how far one child had progressed on a previous attempt at 'Spindles'. She then watched him carry out the activity with 'Spindles' and checked his learning. The child had developed and moved forward, knowing numbers up to nine and that the next number would be 10. The member of staff noted this development in his records.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly developed as the nursery owner individually welcomes every child and their parent at the beginning of the day. She values items children bring in to nursery such as pictures and toys. Children are also encouraged to shake hands as they enter nursery, as well as when they leave. They become independent and make decisions about their time in the nursery. Children help themselves to drinks of milk or water as they wish throughout the morning. They relish the opportunity to have some fruit during the café style snack time. Children cleanse their hands with anti-bacterial cleanser, then take a plate before choosing some fruit from the selection available. They sit in sociable groups around a small table to eat and use paper napkins to wipe their hands and faces afterwards. Children then stack their plates next to the sink for an adult to wash up. Other children enjoy a washing up activity and carefully pour water from a jug into a bowl and add some washing up liquid. They wear plastic aprons and use cloths to wash some cups and then dry them afterwards. They place the dry cups on a tray to be returned to the table for drinks. After the younger children have gone home at the end of the morning older children are asked if they wish to play outside. Some of the children choose to go outside and take a brush to sweep some leaves. Children run around with a ball and take turns on the small slide. Not all the children have the opportunity to play

outside every day. Good manners and social skills are effectively developed for those children who stay over the lunch period. Some children help the set the tables and put out place mats and individual cloth napkins in the named napkin rings. They also put children's personal lunch containers next to their places. After washing their hands children find their own place at the table and sit down for lunch. Children bring all their food out of their lunch boxes, onto plates, and return the containers to the side of the room. They wait for everyone to be ready and then say a brief prayer of thanks. Staff sit with children and eat their lunch at the same time and this makes it a pleasant social occasion. Children talk about their food preferences and ask questions about exotic fruit. After everyone has finished eating children pack away their bags and settle for short rest on soft mats. The children who stay during afternoon join in more targeted learning activities linked to the Montessori curriculum. For example, today three rows of chairs are set out and staff invite children to sit down opposite, in front or behind one another. This helps to reinforce positional language.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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

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