

Lindfield Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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113580

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02/02/2010

Inspector

Lisa Toole

Setting address

The Cricket Pavilion, Lindfield Common, Haywards Heath,
West Sussex, RH16 2EG

Telephone number

01444 484262

Email

Type of setting

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
W: www.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*.

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Description of the setting

Lindfield Montessori Nursery is one of a group of five privately owned nurseries. It opened in 1998 and operates from a cricket pavilion on Lindfield Common in Lindfield, West Sussex. Children have access to a small enclosed outdoor area in addition to the adjacent common. Children are drawn from the surrounding urban and rural areas.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time and the nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. The nursery provides care for children aged from two to under five years and is open each weekday between 09.00am and 3.00pm during school term time only.

There are currently 62 children on roll and of these, 46 receive funding for the provision of free early education. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and also supports children who speak languages other than English.

There are eight members of staff, six of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications; two members of staff are in training. The nursery follows the Montessori teaching method.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The outcomes for each unique child are exceptionally good in the nursery. Every child is extremely well cared for by a dedicated team of staff. They provide a highly successful key person system, to ensure every child is equally valued and enjoys personalised learning. The nursery is strongly led; all staff show a real commitment to improvement and providing the very best level of care and education they can. Consequently, children are dynamic, active and inquisitive learners who are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to develop the range of resources to promote children's learning about technology.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare are unquestionably a high priority in the nursery; staff clearly understand their role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding and provide children with a comfortable, safe and secure environment. The recruitment, vetting and induction procedures also contribute to the successful safeguarding of every child. This is complemented by the excellent maintenance of documentation, good policies and procedures and a well deployed team who work exceptionally well together. They create a lovely caring, harmonious environment; this is reflected in how happy, settled and confident the children are. Staff are highly committed to developing their own knowledge and skills, by increasing their qualification level and attending short courses; in turn, this enhances the provision for children. The nursery team evaluates its practice through regular team meetings, appraisal and self-evaluation, in order to identify future priorities for improvement. Children's views, along with those of their parents, are sought to help inform their future development.

Parents are valued as the children's first educators, with staff working collaboratively to ensure each child is cared for according to their needs and their parents' wishes. Children with additional care and special educational needs and/or disabilities are given exceptionally good support to help them feel as included as any other child. Staff, including the special educational needs coordinator work together with external agencies to help support each child's special need. This results in children feeling valued, safe and being able to successfully develop to their full potential. Consultation events are provided so that parents can be kept informed about their child's progress, along with daily feedback at an informal level. As part of their commitment to improvement the nursery seeks to involve parents, and particularly fathers even more in their children's life at nursery.

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

Right from the start children's needs are given a high priority. Staff spend time getting to know their key children and families during settling visits, finding out about their likes, needs and starting points for learning. The successful key person system enables children to make secure attachments and flourish; this contributes to their emotional well-being and feelings of belonging. The children interact wonderfully well with each other, adults and visitors to the nursery, fostering their self-confidence, as well as their communication and language skills. Each child plays a dynamic role in their learning, with most activities arising directly from their interests; this helps them be active, inquisitive learners who are being challenged in a fun, stimulating way. Dinosaurs are a current favourite and staff create purposeful play environments where the children can use their imaginations as they act out their own ideas and creativity. All areas of learning of the EYFS are given equally important consideration and planning. Staff bring together a range of topics, activities and the children's next steps for learning to provide a rich programme of activities, which offer the children challenge and fun, both in and

outdoors. Outings around the local community and village further extend children's learning, through first-hand experiences. They find out about the past and present, taking photographs and talking about their favourite places in the village and then returning to the nursery to construct a wonderful model of the village with recycled materials. Children benefit from excellent opportunities to learn about equality and diversity in the social and cultural world around them, through interesting activities and playing with a lovely range of resources. These include dual language books, dressing up clothes, musical instruments and small world play things. Each child's learning and development is meticulously observed and assessed to help identify small targets for development to help them as they progress towards the early learning goals of the EYFS. Staff know their key children extremely well and successfully plan different experiences to help them achieve, following both the EYFS and Montessori teaching methods.

The nursery is a vibrant, enabling environment, where every child matters. Children are able to play safely because of the well organised space, both in and outdoors; the nursery is colourful, child-friendly and inviting. Staff maximise the available space within the pavilion to create different learning areas, with a separate base area for the younger children. Equipment is very accessible because of the low level storage, promoting freedom of choice for every child. Children are developing important skills for the future, such as learning about technology, language and literacy, as well as numeracy. They are able to use technology equipment such as the laptop computer and camera. As part of their self-evaluation the nursery has identified this as a priority for improvement for the children, to further increase their understanding of technology.

Risk assessments are fully used to ensure everyone is able to enjoy a safe environment, whether it is at the nursery or on outings around the local area. Visits from the emergency services, planned adult-led activities and general play help the children learn to stay safe and keep healthy. Staff reduce risks of cross-infection through their daily cleaning and good hygiene practices. They teach children about the importance of covering sneezes and coughs, and washing hands as they gain independence regarding their self-care. All staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and ensure records, such as the accident and medication records, are well maintained. Children's health and dietary needs are given a great deal of thought and attention to help them remain healthy. They all enjoy a nutritious range of snacks, enjoy their healthy packed lunches and benefit from sociable meal times because everyone sits down together to eat. Drinking water is easily accessible to help children gain independence about remaining hydrated throughout the day. The children's behaviour is exemplary; they build positive relationships, and learn about respecting each other and valuing diversity.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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