

Seedlings Montessori at Moorlands

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

161028

Inspection date

11/03/2010

Inspector

Brian Evans

Setting address

Moorlands Primary School, Kesteven Way, Southampton,
Hampshire, SO18 5RJ

Telephone number

023 8046 2555

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 0300 123 1231, 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: 0300 123 1231
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

Seedlings Montessori at Moorlands opened in 2001. The day nursery and after school club run from two rooms within Moorlands Primary School, in Bitterne, Southampton, with which the setting has close links. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 41 children from two years to nine years on roll. This includes 29 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions, including, in some cases, all day. The setting is able to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week for 48 weeks a year. The setting is open from 8am until 6pm daily. There are six members of staff who work directly with the children, and the owner is available to cover in the case of any staff absence. All of the staff have Montessori qualifications or are in training, and some have additional early years training. The setting receives support from the local authority. The setting received accreditation by Montessori Education (UK), an investors in children quality assurance scheme, in 2006.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The overall quality of provision is outstanding. Children of all ages make excellent progress in their learning and development because they are provided with high levels of care and challenging activities. Very strong partnerships with parents and carers and external agencies enable the setting to be fully inclusive and to provide very well for the individual child. Children feel very safe and secure and have access to a wide range of play experiences and exciting activities. Staff work together as an excellent complementary team and continually strive to improve the provision through careful reflection on their practice. Thus, the capacity to improve is outstanding.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further extending the outdoor curriculum so that children have greater access to the natural world.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The experienced owner is an outstanding leader who is supported very well by her manager. Safeguarding procedures are very robust. No adult or visitor is allowed

to be alone with a child unless they have undergone rigorous checks with regard to their suitability to work with children. Well organised documentation, risk assessments and detailed records ensure that the children are cared for very appropriately. Policies and procedures are updated regularly to ensure that they reflect the best practice and are followed consistently by staff.

The setting successfully combines the Montessori approach with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff eagerly take up training opportunities to further develop their roles and extend good practice. For example, since the last inspection, staff now have expertise in promoting children's problem-solving skills and language for thinking. The strong focus on meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage is confirmed in practice by evidence of excellent progress in each child's unique learning profile, with all children clearly performing equally well. Additionally, the detailed Montessori record sheets provide further strong evidence of children's outstanding learning and development.

The setting's self-evaluation process is rigorous and the impact of new initiatives are closely monitored. Staff listen closely to what parents and children suggest and respond to their views. Regular surveys of parents, through informal discussion and formal questionnaires, underpin the setting's success. Comments include, 'My child really enjoys the activities and we find the communication book very useful,' and, 'I couldn't ask for more!'

There are also productive partnerships with a number of outside agencies including the local authority and with Montessori Education (UK). These organisations visit regularly and are a part of the provision's self-evaluation process. Staff regularly review how to improve their provision further and, for example, recognise the need to extend the outdoor curriculum so that children have greater access to the natural world. Indoor resources are deployed to their best advantage. They are very carefully set out to encourage progression across all areas of learning and to ensure that children have immediate access to them on low and easily accessible shelves. The available space is very well managed. All of these factors illustrate the ambition to improve and underpin the setting's outstanding capacity to sustain that improvement.

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

As soon as they arrive at the setting, children settle very happily and relate very well with one another. The staff record the children's starting points, so they are aware of the stage of development the children have reached. This information is sought in partnership with the parents and informs planning to enable the staff to organise a suitable range of activities. Children are confident, eager to communicate with each other and with adults, and they respond enthusiastically to the well planned, safe and stimulating environment.

Boys and girls enjoy equally the full range of curriculum resources. Since the last inspection, a daily plan for meeting the needs of children's gross motor physical development has been programmed in the outside area. For example, all children

during the inspection safely practised good balancing on the large apparatus. Staff unobtrusively ensure that no child is left out and offer themselves as very good role models by, for instance, working with them in their activities. A good example was when a small group of children built a tower from different sized bricks. They then discussed how to fit these bricks into different sized holes in discussion with each other and the key person. Each child has an excellent relationship with staff and in turn they are treated and guided as individual personalities. Social and emotional needs and any additional needs are met very well by sensitive adult intervention. Mark making is encouraged with, for example, the children making cards for Mother's Day. They work well independently when, for instance, they look at books, and work in close cooperation with their friends when making up stories.

Brief written observations by staff on early years children are placed in their unique learning profiles. These are regularly analysed by a child's key person and the next steps identified for each area of learning. In a number of respects the setting exemplifies, in partnership with parents, the best practice in the learning and development of early years children. The assessment records confirm the care with which staff provide suitable experiences for early years children and also illustrate the exceptional progress that they make.

The setting's practice on children's welfare is excellent. Hygiene and health are emphasised and reviewed constantly and children reflect this emphasis in their discussions. The setting keeps up to date on current health issues and has clear policies which are regularly reviewed. Children enjoy eating their fruit and drink and use the occasion to confidently talk with adults and with each other. Children confirm an excellent understanding of effective hygiene routines and the benefits of an active lifestyle. Behaviour throughout is outstanding and activities are characterised by a willingness by older and younger children to share and cooperate with each other, and contribute to their community.

The children are supported exceptionally well throughout by enthusiastic staff, who encourage their curiosity, provide a wide variety of experiences and tasks and allow them to make excellent progress. As a result, they are prepared outstandingly well for their future learning.

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	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

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

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

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