

The Chilterns Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY334508
Inspection date	21/09/2010
Inspector	ISP Inspection
Setting address	The Pavilion, Park Place, Seer Green, Beaconsfield, HP9 2FJ
Telephone number	01494 672209
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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).

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.

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Description of the setting

The Chilterns Montessori School is one of two nurseries owned by Oakwood Nursery Schools Ltd. It was registered in 2006 and operates from the cricket pavilion in Seer Green, Buckinghamshire.

A maximum of 30 children from two years to under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 37 children on roll within the early years age range. The nursery is not in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting is open during school term times from 9.00am to 3.30pm each weekday. During school holidays a fun club operates for children up to the age of eight years, from 9.00am to 3.30pm.

There are seven members of staff who work with the children, five of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. Of these, one member of staff is currently undertaking additional training. The setting adopts a Montessori ethos and is a member of Pre-School Learning Alliance. They receive support from Buckinghamshire County Council.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The children are settled, secure and happy. This is as a result of the warm, welcoming and safe environment that is provided. All children are learning and developing and their welfare promoted as a result of the staffs knowledge of the children in their care and through the activities and resources that are provided. However, there are times when the activities are more adult-led than required. The setting works well with parents, carers and others to identify and support the individual needs of all the children. The management team are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are keen to make improvements in order to develop and enhance the service that is offered. Most of the required records are in place, with the exception of written consent to administer medication and the risk assessment records currently lack some detail.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain prior written permission for each and every medicine from parents before any medication is given (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 05/10/2010

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

- ensure the risk assessment covers anything in which a child may come into contact with
- accept wholeheartedly young children's creations and help them to see them as something unique and valuable

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded as staff are clear in their understanding of how to protect them. Clear management responsibilities in relation to child protection have been established by the management team, and staff know and understand the procedures to follow if there are concerns. There are robust systems in place to ensure children are protected from adults who are unvetted. Daily risk assessments are conducted and as a consequence children are safe indoors and out, and furniture, equipment and toys are suitable and safe for use. However, the risk assessment records lack some detail.

Children are treated with respect and are valued as individuals. The setting has effective procedures in place to settle new children. For example, parents were encouraged to complete 'sandcastles' for their child during the summer holidays which included photos of the special people in the child's life, places where they had visited and photos of pets. As a result, most of the children settle well and part easily from parents and carers. Children benefit from a suitably organised environment which enables them to make choices in their play as resources are within easy access. They are provided with a good selection of well maintained resources and activities across all areas of learning.

Self-evaluation is ongoing and continues to develop. The setting has identified areas for development which will improve outcomes for children. For example, they wish to enhance outdoor play opportunities for children by providing a covered area so that the area can be used in all weather conditions. In addition, they continue to develop their systems for planning to ensure they are effectively linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and to improve staffs understanding of the framework by sending them on additional training. The setting has effectively addressed previous recommendations which have resulted in improved outcomes for children.

The setting has established positive relationships with parents and carers, this ensures that individual children are supported and their achievements and well-being promoted. The setting ensures parents are aware of the ethos and framework that is implemented, as an informative notice board with photos, articles and written information about the six areas of learning is available. Communication books keep parents updated about their child's progress and achievements and how this can be extend at home. There are clear and accessible channels for parents and carers to communicate with the setting. In discussion

with parents and carers they express their satisfaction with the service that is provided. The setting has developed positive links with the local private schools and continues to foster links with the state schools.

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

Children's physical health is well promoted as they have access to a well resourced outdoor area where they can climb, run and practise their skills as they manoeuvre their tricycles and cars. Regular visits from football coaches and dance teachers encourage the children to be active, thereby contributing to developing healthy lifestyles. Children are provided with healthy snacks and drinks, such as fruit and breadsticks. The setting has most of the required records in place to support children's health. However, the systems for obtaining written consent from parents before administering medication to children are not in place for all of the children. This has an impact on the children's health and well-being.

Children are secure and develop a sense of belonging. They are aware of what is expected of them and the more able children demonstrate a clear understanding of how to stay safe independently of adult prompts. For example, they understand that they should not stand in front of the swings as they may get hurt. Staff are well deployed to ensure that children are supervised and supported at activities and in their play.

Children make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. This is a result of the effective systems that are in place which identify children's likes, dislikes, interests and abilities. Observation and assessment is clearly linked to planning which is flexible, responding to children's individual interests, their starting points and their capabilities. Clear plans help to identify the next steps in the children's learning and ensure they are actively engaged. Children are excited to explore the different resources and Montessori equipment available to them. For example, when outside the children enjoy pretending to sail the large wooden boat and battle with crocodiles and sharks.

Children are beginning to understand that print carries meaning and the more able children handle books with care and enjoy having stories read to them. They are beginning to learn to take turns in conversation and enjoy talking to their peers and adults. Staff support the children's language and literacy skills as they constantly talk to the children, respond to their questions and pose open-ended questions which encourages the children to think for themselves. The children have access to a computer and programmable toys which supports their interest in information and communication technology. They are developing an understanding of numbers as they learn to count everyday objects, such as the amount of fruit required at snack time. Children investigate how things work and are learning about their environment and living things. For example, they take great delight in digging in the mud to find insects and bugs.

Children are developing a good understanding of the wider community as the

setting acknowledges a range of festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Easter. There are resources and visual images in place that represent children and people of different races, cultures and abilities. Staff encourage children to use mirrors to look at themselves and paint what they see. However, at times this activity is rather adult-led and some children are not enabled to use their own creative skills to represent what it is they see. Children's behaviour is managed in a calm and sensitive manner by staff who set clear, reasonable and consistent limits which helps children to play and work feeling safe and secure. Children are given lots of praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements which promotes their self-esteem and confidence.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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
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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	3
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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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