

# The Deenway Montessori Independent School

Independent school standard inspection report

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

Deenway Montessori School is an independent Islamic day school. It is owned by The Deenway Company Limited, a not-for-profit social enterprise. The school is situated in a Grade 2 listed building located in the town of Reading, Berkshire. It admits boys and girls from three to 11 years. The school is registered for 60 and there are currently 44 full-time, including 18 children who are part-time. The majority of children in the school are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. At the time of the inspection, there were 18 children in the Nursery and seven children in the Reception class, of whom 21 were funded under the Nursery Scheme. The aims of the school are 'to nurture the mind, body and spirit of each child'. The children are predominantly from British South Asian heritage. A significant minority are at an early stage of learning English. There are no children with a statement of special educational needs. This is the school's first Ofsted inspection since it was registered and opened in 2009.

## Evaluation of the school

Deenway Montessori School provides a satisfactory quality of education and meets its aims. All the regulatory requirements for independent schools are met. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children's good behaviour and their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strengths of the school. The curriculum and teaching and assessment are satisfactory, leading to children's satisfactory progress. The promotion of children's welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. The school's safeguarding procedures are secure.

## Quality of education

The satisfactory curriculum is underpinned by the school's sound adoption of the Montessori approach in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Children's House) and in Key Stage 1 and Year 3 (Lower Elementary) class. Planning for Years 4, 5 and 6 (Upper Elementary) is currently based on the National Curriculum. This is a temporary arrangement and sound plans are in place for the school to adopt the

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

Montessori approach for all year groups by the beginning of the next academic year. The school's curriculum policy is satisfactory. Secure plans and schemes of work for all subjects are in place. Personal, social and health education is covered satisfactorily, including 'Circle Time' and 'Cosmic Education' which include dispute resolution and reflections on how to live a peaceful life. The school's religious ethos is promoted well through the Islamic faith. There are regular opportunities for children to study the Qur'an and Arabic through prayer and poetry. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively. Children have suitable opportunities to practice their information and communication technology skills. Physical education is well developed through regular visits to the local university sports park and weekly lessons in Shaolin Kung-Fu. Additional curriculum activities include archery, horse riding and regular visits to a variety of local places including the river, a local library and a supermarket. Enrichment activities have included the Reading Museum of Rural Life and the Child Beale Wildlife Trust.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. From the youngest children to the oldest, teaching ranges from satisfactory to good, with much of the best practice seen in the Lower Elementary class. Where teaching is good, children are provided with a range of activities from which they can choose depending on their interest levels. They are able to work independently with concentration over long periods of time. Teachers use these opportunities of independent working to assess children's progress and encourage their inquisitiveness about different subjects, asking questions and promoting good work habits. Resources are easily accessible and, in the Children's House and Lower Elementary classes, they are almost exclusively traditional Montessori materials. In the lessons where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, teachers direct children for too long, limit access to resources and hinder children from working in groups and being responsible for their own learning. The variable consistency of teaching leads to children making satisfactory progress overall.

Assessment is satisfactory. Currently, several different assessment systems are being employed, including assessment of the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Montessori assessment strategies in Lower Elementary and the use of National Curriculum levels in Upper Elementary. Teachers' use of assessment in planning lessons varies. Some use the information with precision, enabling children to build on their previous learning. Others identify single learning objectives for the whole class regardless of the differing abilities. This inhibits the more able children from making the progress they are capable of and does not always provide enough structure for those children who require additional support. Marking of work is conscientious and regular but is not consistent in quality across the different classes.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is good. Children enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance. During lessons, children are eager to learn and demonstrate an interest in most of the

activities that they are involved in. Children's behaviour is good. They get on well together and are keen to discuss their work in pairs, groups or with adults. Their secure basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology effectively support their future economic well-being. From the Early Years Foundation Stage to the oldest children, the school's promotion of the Islamic faith effectively contributes to positive relationships and high levels of harmony and tolerance. Children demonstrate an inherently good understanding of living in a multicultural society. Children make a positive contribution to the school. They keep their classrooms tidy and well-ordered and are becoming more involved in how their school improves. In the wider community, children visit local maintained primary schools to share information about their beliefs, culture and lifestyles. Funds have been raised for the British Heart Foundation as the result of a suggestion by children. The school organises interesting events to foster children's better understanding about public institutions in England, including visits from local Members of Parliament, councillors and other civic leaders. The children have also been to visit the local police station and the library.

## **Welfare, health and safety of children**

The provision for promoting the safeguarding of all children's welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. This includes that of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff have been appropriately trained for safeguarding. The systems for risk assessments both on and off site meet the regulatory requirements and children's health and safety are treated seriously. This was demonstrated by the school's prompt response to rectifying a minor potential hazard identified during the inspection. However, welfare, health and safety are satisfactory rather than good because inspectors drew the school's attention to some minor administrative errors in its safeguarding documents. These were amended before the end of the inspection. Child protection training has been delivered to all staff by the local authority and the designated member of staff for safeguarding is trained to the appropriate higher level. Incidents of bullying are exceedingly rare and there are no exclusions of any type. Children feel safe and have good opportunities to learn how to live healthy lifestyles. This includes regular opportunities for learning about healthy diets during science lessons and how to be physically active whilst taking part in physical education lessons. There is an appropriate access development plan to support the requirements of the Disability and Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school has effectively carried out the required checks on all staff prior to their appointment. All these checks are recorded correctly in a single central register.

## **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The school's premises and accommodation meet all of the regulatory requirements, supporting children's safety and effective learning. The building is in a good

decorative state. Classrooms are well maintained and meet the needs of the ages of children and number on roll, including those for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is reasonable space outdoors for playtime and games, but the school has to use local facilities for indoor physical education lessons.

### **Provision of information**

The school provides clear, accurate and up-to-date information for current and prospective parents and carers. There is a clear and helpful prospectus and website. Almost all of the parental questionnaires returned were very positive, indicating that the parents hold the school in high regard.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school's complaints procedure meets the requirements.

### **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Outcomes are satisfactory. Children settle in quickly because of the good partnerships between the suitably qualified staff and the parents and carers. On admission, children's knowledge, skills and understanding are slightly below what is typically expected for their age. This is particularly the case for those who are in the early stages of learning English. Children make satisfactory progress. As a result, their attainment is broadly average by the time they start the Lower Elementary class.

Relationships between staff and children are respectful, contributing to children's good personal development and well-being. Children feel safe and secure and are able to confide in staff if they need help or support. They are well behaved and considerate to each other.

Provision is satisfactory. Children's learning is supported by a reasonable range of indoor resources and teaching methods. However, the outdoor learning environment is underdeveloped. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff observe children learning and use assessment information to plan their teaching, but the information collated on entry and during learning activities is not always fully analysed to identify the children's starting points or next steps. This sometimes leads to children all doing work which is similar, regardless of their abilities. Children visit local parks and places of interest regularly but the current physical restrictions of the building limit children's access to the outdoors.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. As a result, the appropriately qualified staff work together as a closely knit team and are responsive to the children's needs. They manage behaviour well and supervision is good. Parents and carers are provided with appropriate information about their children's progress, personal development and well-being.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- ensure that the school's system for assessment is more consistent so as to enable children's learning needs to be identified more accurately
- develop a consistent approach to teachers' use of assessment strategies during lessons so that all children are provided with an appropriate level of challenge and can make good progress.
- Improve access to the outdoor learning environment for the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Develop the outdoor learning environment to provide resources and equipment that meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of children			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of children's needs			✓	
How well children make progress in their learning			✓	

### Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of children		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of children

The overall welfare, health and safety of Children			✓	
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	



## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Montessori primary school		
<b>Date school opened</b>	2009		
<b>Age range of Children</b>	3–11 years		
<b>Gender of Children</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time Children)</b>	Boys: 21	Girls: 23	Total: 44
<b>Number on roll (part-time Children)</b>	Boys: 8	Girls: 10	Total: 18
<b>Number of children with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees</b>	£3,600		
<b>Address of school</b>	3-5 Sidmouth Street Reading Berkshire RG1 4QX		
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 957 4737		
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:connect@deenway.org">connect@deenway.org</a>		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Karim		
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Deenway Company Ltd		