

Christchurch Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY136941

Inspection date

21/09/2010

Inspector

Dinah Round

Setting address

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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

Christchurch Montessori Pre-school has been registered since 2002. It operates from a large hall and smaller room in a scout hut, close to Christchurch town centre in Dorset. The nursery serves the local area. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, as well as the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A total of 44 children from two years of age until the end of the early years may attend at any one time. There are currently 44 children on roll in the early years age group, of these, 24 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties as well as children for whom English is an additional language. The pre-school opens five days a week, for 48 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 08:00am - 3:30pm. Five members of staff work directly with the children. Of these, four hold early years qualifications. The setting uses the Montessori method of teaching and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed in to a friendly and relaxed environment. Staff develop an understanding of children's individual needs through working with parents and external agencies. Children enjoy a varied range of play opportunities and experiences which help to promote their development, however, at times activities do not fully support children's learning. Children's welfare is suitably supported, although, not all requirements are sufficiently maintained. There are satisfactory systems in place to evaluate the provision and reflect on areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure prior written consent is obtained for each and every medicine from parents before any medication is given (Promoting good health) 28/09/2010
- ensure that fresh drinking water is available for children at all times (Promoting good health) - - date to be completed 28/09/2010

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

- ensure key person systems are effectively maintained to support all children's individual needs
- make sure that all safety measures are consistently in place so children are

- protected at all times
- review the organisation of group activities so they are effective in meeting all children's needs
- maximise use of the outdoor environment to provide greater learning experiences for children and ensure that the equipment provided is in good condition

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The provision is generally well organised with most records, policies and procedures maintained. Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures are followed to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Regular risk assessments are completed on all areas children come into contact with which helps to identify and minimise risks to children. However, some safety measures identified are not followed through in practice, for example the chain to secure the external gate is not put in place and staff supervision of the climbing frame is not sufficiently maintained. This impacts on children's safety. Staff follow effective hygiene routines to help reduce the spread of infection, however, at times prior written consent is not obtained from parents before administering medication which is a requirement. Staff have a sound understanding of possible indicators of child abuse and are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow to ensure that children are safeguarded.

The spacious room is thoughtfully laid out to provide separate areas for the differing age groups. Resources are stored at low level so they are easily accessible and allow children to make free choices about their play. Children go outside daily for a set time which provides them with access to some outdoor play activities, although, this is not maximised. Staff work together as a team to support the running of the sessions, however, key person systems are not consistent to ensure that all children's needs are effectively supported. Staff are supported in attending training to continue to update their knowledge, and regular staff meetings are used to revisit training issues. A self-evaluation form has been completed which has helped staff to consider some areas for improvement within the provision. Questionnaires are sent out to gather feedback from parents and help staff reflect on ways to make it better for children attending.

Staff develop positive relationships with parents and carers which contribute towards establishing effective partnerships. Clear settling-in procedures are followed to support children's transition from home to the setting to help them feel secure. The daily informal discussion between staff and parents means there is a regular exchange of information about children's care needs. Parents are kept well informed about the provision, they receive copies of the policies and procedures, termly newsletters and attend family 'fun days' to observe what their child does while at the setting. There are good systems in place to link with other agencies to ensure children who have additional needs are well supported.

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

Most children come into the group well; they quickly settle and willingly take part in the activities. Staff provide reassurance for less confident children offering sensitive support to help them settle and play. Children relate well to staff and feel comfortable to make their needs known as they can be assured of a friendly response. There is a suitable balance of both adult and child-initiated activities with a sufficient level of challenge to interest and engage children. However, group activities are not always managed effectively to ensure that all children's needs are taken into consideration. For example, during group storytime children do not always listen well, some lose interest and distract others. Observation and assessments systems are generally consistent and used effectively to help staff monitor children's progress and plan future learning opportunities. Children generally behave well, they receive gentle reminders from staff to have 'kind hands' during their play and staff offer praise and encouragement to help build their self-esteem.

Children's independence is successfully promoted as they self-select their own activities, and older children pour their own drinks and choose their fruit at snack time. Children are confident communicators and happily chat and share their experiences with others during their play. For example, a three-year-old eagerly shows others how she can write her own name. Children have access to a variety of books; however, several are badly torn and have pages missing which impacts on children's learning and enjoyment. Children are introduced to counting, shape, size and simple problem-solving through the wide range of Montessori equipment provided. Children are provided with a variety of creative play activities, although, these are less accessible to younger children. The older children have fun manipulating the dough and using tools to create different shapes and models. Children's physical development is suitably promoted as they pedal bikes, crawl through the tunnel and negotiate the climbing frame. This helps to develop their balance and co-ordination skills.

Children are learning about healthy lifestyles and the importance of following regular hand washing routines for their personal hygiene. They benefit from being provided with a broad range of healthy and nutritious foods which are freshly cooked on the premises and cater for all dietary needs. However, drinking water is not available for children at all times which is a requirement. Children are developing a sense of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they receive gentle reminders from staff to walk inside and learn about fire safety through discussion and planned activities.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
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	3

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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