

Smiles Montessori Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Susan Parker
Setting address	Unit One, The Fairway, Bush Fair, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6LY
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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*.

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Description of the setting

Smiles Montessori Pre school opened in 2003. It operates from a suite of rooms, within a unit on a light industrial area of Bush Fair in Harlow. The pre school serves the local area. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 64 children at any one time.

There are currently 151 children from three months to five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre school supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week. Morning sessions run from 9am until 12pm, lunch sessions from 12pm until 1pm and afternoon sessions from 1pm until 4pm. There are additional hours from 7.30am until 9am and 4pm until 6.30pm to provide longer sessions if required.

31 members of staff work at the pre school of which 16 work directly with the children and hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time at this welcoming pre school. Excellent observations and records of children's individual achievements and individually tailored challenges enable children to make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. Staff ensure that parents are fully informed about what their children are doing and are effective in sharing information about their needs and routines.

The manager and staff are highly motivated and have a positive approach to self-evaluation. They have established detailed systems to support the continuous review of their work, enabling them to prioritise areas for improvement and offer a service which is fully inclusive of the needs of all of its users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the outstanding organisation of the setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

A comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues amongst all staff within the setting ensures that children's safety and welfare are actively promoted. All

members of staff access safeguarding training and additionally access certified First Aid training. This ensures that the staff responsibilities are clearly understood. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised. Stringent checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. The Manager follows a robust recruitment and selection process to provide a highly skilled staff team who deliver warm, consistent care and education to all children.

The setting has established a detailed self-evaluation process which highlights the outstanding organisation of the setting and identifies positive improvements. All members of staff regularly exchange views and ideas through regular discussions and staff meetings. They actively seek feedback on their strengths and weaknesses from children, parents and carers. Staff are supported in attending further training and gaining qualifications. This helps create a positive learning environment, where both children and staff thrive.

Resources are of high quality and are used well to promote children's learning and development. Outcomes for children are clearly attributed to the excellent use of resources including the excellent deployment of staff. Staff provide a wide range of high quality, challenging and age-appropriate equipment and furniture to aid language, social, emotional, spiritual, cultural, physical and sensory development. Children have access to a broad range of safe, good quality, purposeful and developmentally appropriate toys, furniture and equipment. Children are able to access resources at child height, thus enabling them to become independent and make choices. Good use is made of the rooms and resources to provide a wide selection of activities based around the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Staff have an extremely sound knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan and deliver an excellent range of stimulating, challenging activities and learning opportunities. These activities are assessed and evaluated to ensure the learning objectives are achieved. Plans show how activities are adapted and extended for individual children. Staff are also very effective at extending spontaneous child-led opportunities and promoting children's independence and choices in this outstanding learning environment. Each child is assessed on their individual needs, and their needs are met effectively through daily planning of activities. Daily plans also reflect extension and adaptation for all children. All planned activities are evaluated to assess their effectiveness and highlight strengths and weaknesses of the children. This then informs future planning. Children's understanding of respect for one another, cultures, disability awareness, languages, race etc is promoted in a positive way through linking these areas into topics and activities. All resources are reflective of the children's cultures through an abundance of familiar words, toys, books and games. Staff ensure that they understand each child's background, cultures, and beliefs and encourage children to recognise and respect differences. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are offered opportunities to talk about their beliefs, families, and recent experiences. This enables all children to feel welcome and valued.

Regular open evenings are held to enable the key workers and parent or carers to discuss the children's progress. Parents are kept informed on a daily basis through

the use of verbal discussions, notices and regular newsletters. The pre-school is highly committed to working in partnership with others and takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships. This ensures a coherence of learning and development across all settings that the children attend.

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

Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning and development. They are fully supported in achieving because staff have an exemplary understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children display very good skills and attitudes towards learning as a direct result of the excellent input from the staff team. They observe and assess children as they play, using this information to inform activity planning. Staff respond quickly to children's developmental needs and adaptations to planned activities can be carried out on a daily basis. This enables them to provide tailored experiences and activities which actively promote children's individual development.

The environment is highly stimulating and accessible, enabling children to make independent choices and select their own resources. Children self register on arrival, putting their coats on their named pegs. This promotes children's sense of belonging, their confidence and self-esteem. Children have daily access to the gardens and link the indoor and outdoor learning environments successfully, growing plants indoors as well as outside. Children learn about lifecycles and caring for animals through their assorted pets from the two guinea pigs Bubble and Squeak, the parrot Stevie, the hamster and numerous fish in tanks.

Children display their feelings of safety as they confidently move from one area of play to another, accessing their own resources to develop their own play. They routinely learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example, following direction when evacuating the premises in an emergency and using tools safely. Children are rewarded with lots of praise from staff, which further promotes their self-esteem. This actively encourages children to develop habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners, whilst respecting and understanding their own and other's needs.

Each child has their own assessment folder which acts as a record of their outstanding progress. These assessments are meaningful and relevant to the individual child. Detailed and practical observations and monitoring of the children's development and achievements in all areas of learning, effectively highlights the next stages for individuals.

Children have formed good relationships with the staff, whose consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show care and concern for each other, sharing resources, listening and taking turns in discussions, for example helping each other to put on painting aprons. Staff act as positive role models. They encourage the children to work together to sort out any issues. Children respond positively and demonstrate a good sense of responsibility for their

behaviour. They are confident and therefore are actively involved in their learning and are developing positive attitudes.

Children's understanding of diversity is developed as they participate in daily discussions, access relevant resources and celebrate festivals that reflect their beliefs and those of their friends. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make excellent progress. They are supported in developing their knowledge of English and the staff also value the children's own language. Good use of baby sign language enables children to communicate without barriers.

Children are respected as individuals and the curriculum is tailored to suit all capabilities and needs. Continual assessment by each child's key worker allows any strengths or weakness to be identified, and adaptations to curriculum planning are made. They learn how to think for themselves and make decisions through the use of open-ended questions and encouragement of listening skills. Children's progress is constantly monitored through observations and evaluations of plans. Children develop skills for the future as they share ideas and work together. For example, children using a construction set discuss their models, comparing size, shape and colour. They have many opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. Young children enjoy snuggling up with a member of staff and sharing a book. Children regularly make marks in everyday play. They enjoy making music and learning new songs and the actions that go with them. This enables them to learn about rhyme and to interpret the words with their bodies in a creative way.

All children, based on their starting points and abilities, make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals in this welcoming pre school.

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

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

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