

# Overton Children's House

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY421268

**Inspection date**

10/05/2011

**Inspector**

Loraine Wardlaw

**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.

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**

Overton Children's House registered in 20011. It is one of two Montessori settings owned by a private individual and operates from a community hall, in the village of Overton, near Basingstoke. The children attending come from the village and the surrounding areas.

The Children's House operates Monday to Friday from 8:00 am until 3:00 pm during term time only. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 50 children from two to eight years. There are currently 21 on roll. The setting provides early education funding for three and four- year-old's. The Children's House employs five members of staff to work with the children which includes the owner/manager. All staff are qualified to level two to four in Montessori education.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are extremely happy, settled and confident; they are well supported by knowledgeable and caring staff, who have a good grasp of each child's individual needs. The well-prepared indoor Montessori learning environment enables children to make gains in most areas of their development. The outdoor environment is currently in development. The newly registered setting has very good systems to effectively evaluate their practice. This constant self-reflection means that the setting is evolving all the time; they demonstrate a very good capacity to improve.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- update records to reflect children's capabilities as they progress towards the early learning goals and include written, anecdotal, observational evidence to be shared with parents in the children's learning journeys.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

A good emphasis on safeguarding means that all staff hold a clear Criminal Records Bureau check and undergo a robust recruitment procedure. Visitors are recorded and are asked to read information on the emergency evacuation procedure and to switch off mobile phones. Staff have a clear understanding of the child protection procedure to take in the event of concerns of abuse. Good documented risk assessments ensure the premises are safe and free from hazards, making it suitable for children's use. The premises are secure and staff are vigilant

with regards to the arrival and departure of children; they always promote safe outcomes for children. The children's house is organised into the five Montessori areas which cover all of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum areas. Children can freely select activities to explore or master such as pouring and threading in the practical life area or mark making in the literacy area. Staff are deployed effectively supporting children well in their learning and the independent routines that are promoted extremely effectively, upholding the Montessori approach. Children have opportunities to access the outdoor area for physical play and adult-led activities, but the free-flow system for indoor and outdoor choices, throughout the day, is not fully in operation yet.

The strong leadership of the manager/owner ensures there is effective team working in place. The manager and staff demonstrate a high commitment to improving the quality of education and care that they offer through excellent development plans which are discussed at weekly staff meetings. For example, these include actions to ensure the garden is an extension of the main hall and contains activities of every area. The new learning journeys are to incorporate the child's ownership and parent comments. Self-evaluation is accurate with several systems in place; this includes the commencement of the Ofsted on-line self-evaluation tool. The staff who have transferred from the sister children's house in Steventon are committed to ongoing professional development; they regularly attend training to strive for the best outcomes for children. For example, the manager is undertaking an Early Years Foundation degree which has inspired her to develop an excellent a multi-lingual programme and policy. However, it is not yet fully implemented for all to reap the benefits. Staff are proactive in building and developing positive relationships with parents and carers. Systems in place include a good, flexible settling in programme, quality written information on the setting and very regular exchange of day to day information. This involves verbal handovers and the use of electronic mail to ensure good quality communication meets the needs of children and parents alike. Parents speak very positively and knowingly about the setting. A few independently organise a social event and fund raise for the children's house, making an excellent contribution. Regular parents evenings will inform parents of children's developmental progress; observational evidence and photo evidence of the children participating in the educational programme in the form of learning journeys are still being developed to be shared with parents. An inclusive and comprehensive service is offered to each family, ensuring that children's welfare and learning needs are met well, so that no child is disadvantaged in any way. The staff understand about how best to meet the needs of bi-lingual children and provide a positive cultural environment for all children to embrace.

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

Children feel safe and show a strong sense of security in the spacious, clean and well-arranged children's house. Even the newest children swiftly feel at ease with their new routines because staff are on hand to give them the good support they need. This is very evident during lunch-time when their key person explains

carefully about independently taking out their food from the lunch box and putting it on the plate. Afterwards they are shown how to wash their plate and glass using the small washing up bowl, brush and drainer. Older children demonstrate extreme confidence and show an excellent awareness of responsibility within the setting often telling new children the routines and activities. Their behaviour is exemplary and they show great care for the others in the group. For example, they talk with concern about a friend who has fallen and bumped their head, being comforted by an adult, holding an ice pack character to the bump. All staff support and interact really well with the children, which effectively promotes and stimulates learning. Lunch-time promotes many areas of learning; it is a very social occasion with staff sitting with the small group of children promoting good manners, conversation and thinking skills. Staff planning follows the Montessori curriculum incorporating children's individual needs and starting points. The adults know children extremely well and keep tracking records of children's attainment in each of these areas. A computer software programme links the Montessori areas to the Early Years Foundation Stage areas and steps to the early learning goals. However, not all of these records reflect children's capabilities and written observations and comments from the adults which shows evidence of children's progress are sparse. Records to be shared with parents do not, yet, clearly show the progress that the children make towards all of the early learning goals.

Children are clearly learning from the enabling and stimulating environment. Coupled with the staff's skilled interaction and timely support, in some curriculum areas, they make excellent progress. For example, in knowledge and understanding of the world children demonstrate they are inquisitive learners. They are keen to observe what is on the nature table with the magnifying glass and when children show an interest in the plastic mini beasts the practitioner is adept at extending it into learning about the life cycle of the butterfly. For example, four-years-olds are encouraged to name the plastic models of an egg, caterpillar, chrysalis and butterfly and to put them in order of the life cycle on a white tray. They observe and count their own living caterpillars recently hatched from eggs in a small pot and talk about the living conditions of the growing caterpillars. Later they select an information book from the literacy area all about butterflies, give it to the adult and prompt them to read it, asking many questions. Later they use picture cards to order and sequence the life cycle re-enforcing what they have learnt. Younger children explore the specialised activities in the practical life area, spooning dried peas into ceramic pots and pretend it is to eat offering it to an adult, developing their imagination skills. Children know how to keep safe and demonstrate this through discussion with the adults. For example, they talk about the differences of plastic and glass and know the consequences should the glass water beaker at lunch-time fall on the floor. During outings in the local environment children keep safe by holding onto a 'walking rope'; they know the rules of the setting really well. Children's health and well-being are promoted through effective hygiene procedures which children independently undertake. They enjoy daily outdoor play in the fresh air. A weekly sports coach teaches skills with balls and other small equipment, which the staff implement on other days of the week so all children are included. An organic fruit box is delivered to the setting which means snacks promote healthy eating. All children are valued as unique individuals and their cultural and linguistic heritage is embraced. Tri-lingual

staff at the setting are able to talk to children in a different language which effectively promotes a positive sense of identity. Parents are invited in to share their culture and language such as reading books in French and singing French songs.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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