

Sitara Toto Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

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Inspector

Jane Mount

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

Sitara Tota Montessori is privately owned and registered in July 2004. The provision is based at the Scout Activity Centre in Well End, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire. It operates from two rooms, with an integral kitchen and toilet facilities. Children have access to two secure outside play areas and the building is set within a large woodland area which is used for walks. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.30am until 3pm during term time only. Children can attend for a variety of sessions, including all day.

The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 30 children from the age of two years. There are currently 33 children on roll and of these, 10 children receive government funding for early years education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Sitara Tota Montessori operates in line with the Montessori educational philosophy of teaching. It employs six members of staff and the majority of the staff team hold early years qualifications and are Montessori trained. The leader also has Early Years Professional Status (EYPS).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children flourish in an inclusive, child-centred, enabling environment where the nursery recognises the uniqueness of each child. Highly effective partnerships between staff, parents and others positively contribute to the setting's knowledge of individual children to ensure their needs are fully met. A committed staff team effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and their welfare is fully protected. Children are making rapid progress towards the early learning goals as their learning is purposefully promoted. Strong leadership, rigorous monitoring of practice and effective self-evaluation mean that plans are well targeted and improvements continue to be made where they have the greatest impact on children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to use a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend highly effective practice and ensure continuous improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust, with rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures in place. A highly informative safeguarding policy, along with staff who fully understand their roles and responsibilities if they did have a concern, ensure children's welfare is protected. Children's safety is of high priority throughout the organisation of the nursery. Staff are extremely vigilant when recognising hazards and take positive steps to minimise these. Systematic and highly effective risk assessments, including daily checks and assessments for outings and walks, keep children safe. The security of the premises and outside areas, effective staff deployment and the close supervision of children ensure an environment that remains safe at all times.

The leadership and management of the provision is strong, which results in staff who work extremely well together as a team and who take responsibility for what they do within the nursery. Their enthusiasm for caring for children is evident and, as a result, outcomes for children are very positive, with an inclusive environment created which clearly shows that each child matters. Continuous professional development is positively encouraged and staff undertake extensive and varied training. The staff team are reflective in their practice and the nursery closely monitors itself to assess the quality of the provision. This includes seeking feedback and regularly consulting with parents and children. A rigorous, self-evaluation system is used to systematically identify the setting's strengths and areas they wish to develop further. The setting aims to actively use this as a way of ensuring continuous improvement in the future.

All required documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and very well organised. Comprehensive policies and procedures are used effectively by staff to protect children, promote their well-being and support all to develop to their full potential. All aspects of the nursery are extremely well organised. Exceptional good use of space, resources and effective staff deployment ensures an enabling, child-centred environment. Excellent partnerships with parents significantly contribute to children's well-being and ensure their care and learning needs are fully supported. All children and their families are valued and included. Parents receive a wealth of good quality information about the nursery and are kept well informed. They speak very highly about the well-established, experienced staff team and the high levels of care and education their children receive. Effective systems for working with parents and other agencies ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are closely monitored and given valuable support to enable them to participate and achieve. Partnerships with other early years providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage are in place, with links being forged with local schools, thereby supporting children's transition to school and ensuring continuity and the full integration of care and learning.

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

The nursery has a highly welcoming, child-centred environment that enables children to become independent and enthusiastic learners. Staff are successful at motivating children to capture their interest and arouse their curiosity because they are enthusiastic themselves. Children arrive happy and quickly settle and engage in activities. The staff team implement an ethos where the environment is the children's place and children initiate play and learn at their own pace. Children's progress is closely monitored as systematic observation and assessment systems have been implemented which clearly show children's achievements over time. This information is then used when planning future play experiences for individual children, with staff who are skilled at guiding and presenting activities which fully support children's learning. Consequently, all children's learning needs are identified and catered for and they are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. The nursery is based on the Montessori philosophy and the staff team have seamlessly combined this with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring that children's needs are exceptionally well met.

Children are enthusiastic in their play as they keenly participate in an extensive range of appropriately challenging and stimulating play experiences. The environment is organised to achieve maximum child independence, with children encouraged to put on their own coats and change their shoes themselves and put away whatever activity they have been using. Older children are confident in making choices and freely move between the indoor and outdoor environments. A rolling snack time also enables children to choose for themselves when they are hungry and wish to have their snack. Younger children's self-help skills are fully promoted, with staff encouraging them to try things for themselves and supporting them while they try to succeed. Children play an active role in the setting, which results in them being secure in their surroundings.

Their creative development is fully promoted and they have many opportunities to explore varied materials and media. They regularly experience music and delight in learning about famous composers. Children are good communicators who are keen to share their thoughts and ideas with others. They confidently talk about a visit to an art gallery and share their ideas and thoughts when listening to stories. Children learn about other cultures and religions and have extensive opportunities to talk about their families and home life. Exceptional use is made of the outside area to maximise opportunities for children's learning. Children learn about the environment and the world around them, such as weekly nature walks to observe the local wildlife and the changes to the seasons throughout the year.

The setting takes effective steps to promote children's good health and well-being and to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn to take responsibility for washing their own hands, flushing toilets or wiping their noses and disposing of tissues appropriately. Healthy eating is promoted and children are provided with healthy food choices at snack time and lunch time. All food is freshly prepared on the premises and menus are shared with parents. Children are encouraged to try

new foods and participate in activities where they learn about the benefits of healthy eating. Plenty of fresh air and exercise keep children fit and develop their confidence in all aspects of physical development. Children enjoy regular yoga sessions and are able to move with control and coordination as they manoeuvre around obstacles when riding bikes. They confidently climb, balance and jump.

Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and are confident and self-assured in the setting. Highly positive relationships between staff, children and parents enable children to feel secure. Children's understanding of keeping safe is evident and staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe as they explain and practise simple procedures, such as not running when indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children keenly participate in regular fire drills and therefore learn how to stay safe in an emergency. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff are excellent role models and empower children to take responsibility for themselves as they learn to listen, share, take turns and be kind to others. Praise and encouragement from staff ensure children develop high levels of self-esteem.

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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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