

Wise Owl Montessori Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	116731
Inspection date	19/09/2011
Inspector	Susan May
Setting address	United Reformed Church, Cores End Road, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire, SL8 5HZ
Telephone number	01628 525210 and 523724
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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

Wise Owl Montessori Ltd is a private provision that opened in 1994. It operates from the United Reformed Church on the outskirts of Bourne End, Buckinghamshire. The group has use of two halls, one of which is on the first floor, a kitchen and a secure outside area. The nursery serves families from the local community and surrounding area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and may provide care for a maximum of 24 children. There are currently 20 children on roll in the early years age range, of whom eight three- and one four-year old are in receipt of early education funding. The nursery is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery opens five mornings a week from 9am until 12 noon during school term times only. Children may attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employ four staff, all of whom hold a recognised early years qualification. The setting follows the Montessori Method of teaching.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery is organised effectively, with support for children's individual welfare and development needs promoted by well-qualified staff. Children behave exceptionally well and have opportunities to develop independence in most areas. An inclusive setting is provided overall, where all children are warmly welcomed. Toys and resources promote learning well in most areas. Children's progress is good and supported by a range of interesting planned activities. The nursery has excellent links with other early years practitioners and health professionals to enable all children to reach their full potential. Relationships with parents are good. The commitment in improving the outcomes for children is evident in the reflective evaluation systems; therefore their capacity to improve is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- promote independence and children's awareness of their needs by providing further opportunities for children to make choices at snack time
- expand children's interest and curiosity in the world around them by making accessible a wider range of resources to support and enhance their knowledge.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is a long established childcare setting, with a well trained and experienced staff who work well together. The staff team continually strives to provide quality care and demonstrate commitment to developing practices. Rigorous recruitment systems are in place to ensure all staff are suitable, appropriately vetted and qualified. There are comprehensive safeguarding procedures, risk assessments and security measures to help ensure children are kept safe at all times. Staff appraisal systems identify both the nursery and individual staff training needs and staff regularly attend local authority courses. Support and advice is available and sought from the local authority early years team. All required policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents. Accident and medication forms are completed accurately and all children's documentation is in place and is stored confidentially. Staff know each child and their family circumstance well, their needs met as each child is given an individual learning plan. Each child is encouraged to recognise their individuality, feel a sense of belonging and is able to participate fully in the provision. Inclusion is threaded throughout the nursery. Children play in a welcoming environment with access to toys and resources that provide opportunities for all children to learn through their play. The nursery makes best use of its outdoor area in offering a wide range of learning experiences through the toys and resources provided.

Staff have good partnerships with parents and excellent relationships with external agencies, providing children with every opportunity to reach their full potential. Staff work closely with local school staff to ensure that the transition from preschool to school is sensitively handled and children are well prepared for the next step in their education. The nursery's partnership with parents includes sharing information on their children's development and learning progress. Parents are requested to reinforce children's learning through some related activities at home, for example, number recognition and writing their name. Parents' comments reflect the regard they have for the care and learning their children receive as they state the nursery is "brilliant", how well prepared for school their children are and the support and encouragement they have received in helping their children move forward. Staff show increasing confidence in their application of reflective practice using their self-evaluation as a working document to monitor their progress with input sought from parents, staff and children.

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

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment. Staff provide good opportunities to help children progress well across all areas of learning. They have a clear understanding of the early learning goals and steps towards them, recognising that children learn through play. A broad range of adult- and child-initiated activities provide children with stimulating and challenging experiences.

Toys and resources are easily accessible for children to self select what they wish to play with, and appropriate areas enable them to enjoy what they have chosen. Consideration has been given to providing learning opportunities outdoors, although the layout of the building prevents free flow play. This is especially beneficial for those children who prefer to play outdoors. Children are eager to join in with activities and confidently participate in all aspects of the nursery session, for example, they happily sit down for a singing session and join in enthusiastically, taking turns to choose what they want to sing. Children develop control and coordination as they play with malleable materials such as play dough, using tools to cut and shape the dough. Physical skills are developing well, as children have access outdoor play and equipment in the large hall on which they can climb and jump. Children develop their senses as they explore their creativity, handling a range of different textures, as examples of their artwork on display demonstrates. Children access books and sit comfortably in the book corner that provides a quiet area. At other times they enjoy a story as they join together in a group. Systems to record children's abilities and achievements include observations and assessments, progress records and their next steps. Contributions from parents are encouraged and valued. Staff plan together, with the child's key person highlighting individual children's needs in order to offer a range of activities and experiences that enable each child to move their learning forward. A record of children's development is maintained, all records are shared with parents and parents are encouraged to speak to staff at any time to discuss children's progress.

Staff promote children's thinking, vocabulary, reasoning and numeracy through activities and everyday events. This is exemplified as children are encouraged through skilful dialogue to explore size and shape and build with small and large construction equipment. For example, they make a path around which they can carefully walk. Children begin to recognise that the written word has meaning, as they have named coat pegs, see displayed posters and labelled resources. Language skills are developed, as staff ask open ended questions to encourage vocabulary, thinking and thought processes. Staff know the children well and all children are included in activities. Children begin to find out about the wider world through some planned activities about events important to them. However, resources do not always challenge children's thinking and curiosity of the world around them to help them begin to understand about similarities and differences of their own and others' lives. Children have opportunities to go outdoors daily, talk about the weather and begin to find out about community as they go on outings, for example, to a local farm.

Children are confident and sociable. Staff provide excellent role models, promoting positive behaviour at all times. Consequently, children behave extremely well and are eager and willing to share and take turns. They follow simple rules that they reinforce with each other as they play. For example, children tell each other they need to wait until one child has finished walking the 'path' they have made before another starts. Children are curious and eager to try new things, while demonstrating a growing awareness of keeping themselves and others safe, for example, handling the child-sized chairs carefully when they help put them away. Children begin to find out about good hygiene as staff remind them to clean their hands before eating. However, the location of the bathroom does not allow children to access the facilities independently. Healthy and nutritious snacks are

provided for the children and drinks are always available. However, opportunities to promote independence and raise children's awareness of their needs by providing opportunities for children to decide when they want their snack and serve themselves are limited. Children develop skills for the future as they become familiar with every day technology through role-play, for example, as they use telephones and access interactive toys. Staff respect the children's views and listen to their ideas; children build good relationships with each other and staff, showing respect for each other and the environment. Children's work is valued and praise frequently given by staff for their achievements, this helps to build self-esteem and foster children's sense of belonging within the setting.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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
--	-----