

Mulberry Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY347249
Inspection date	09/01/2009
Inspector	Lynn Clements
Setting address	Mulberry Montessori School, Royston Lane, Comberton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB23 7EE
Telephone number	01223 263646
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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.

Description of the setting

Mulberry Montessori School opened in 2007. It is privately owned. It operates from a purpose-built building and access is on one level. It is situated on the outskirts of Comberton, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.50 to 18.00 all year round. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery uses the Montessori approach, integrated with early learning goals, to help children learn.

The nursery employs seven members of staff. Four of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The needs of all children are met well as the provider and members of staff recognise their individual requirements, in addition, there are clear systems in place enabling the management team to reflect on practice, this enables them to develop the service and continue to meet children's individual needs effectively. Staff provide good support for each child so that no group or individual is disadvantaged. They have begun linking the Montessori philosophy to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with regards to observing, planning and assessing all children. Clear systems are in place to safeguard children's welfare in relation to child protection, however, systems regarding the protection of children's confidentiality and correctly recording children's attendance within the setting are not consistently maintained. Open partnerships with parents and others, in the wider context, are very good and ensure that continuity of care is provided for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further, observation, planning and assessment systems within the EYFS to ensure that children's next steps for learning are clearly identified and all children continue to make good progress towards the six early learning goals
- ensure that records relating to children are only accessible to those who have a right or a professional need to see them, this relates to accident records.

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

- ensure that daily registers are maintained for children which includes their hours of attendance. (Documentation).

23/01/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Good management and working as a team enables the provider and members of staff to draw up effective policies and procedures which in turn provides positive outcomes and helps to protect children's welfare. All records are stored securely and on the whole confidentiality is respected. However, accident records are currently all recorded on one page and do not reflect the settings policy on keeping all records made of children confidential. All required paperwork is in place, however, daily registers do not include children's hours of attendance, so that they can be safely accounted for at all times.

The leadership team have worked effectively with other agencies to reflect and evaluate how their school works and how they can improve on the provision and services they offer. They have identified a current weakness in systems with regard to planning, observing and assessing children's learning, within the EYFS. Positive action has been taken and staff have been involved in in-house training sessions and new staff members with relevant EYFS training and previous experience are now in place to support existing key persons, this attention to developing practice is to ensure that every child makes good progress towards the six early learning goals.

Significant improvements since the last inspection include the fact that the children are now housed in a secure building and can now access the enclosed outside play area safely. In addition, children are safeguarded well because required checks are carried out on staff before they start working with the children.

Good partnerships with parents and other agencies ensures that information on children is shared thoughtfully. All members of staff work productively with parents and clear systems are in place to support interaction and encourage parents to take an active role in their child's learning and development within Mulberry Montessori School.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are confident and secure in the setting. They develop their understanding in all six areas of learning. Children develop their communication and literacy skills as they share news from home, join in group story time and enjoy linking sounds to letters as they sound out and write their names on their creations. Children develop problem solving and reasoning skills as they explore number rods and count out objects then link them to the corresponding number symbols. They enjoy matching games and puzzles or working out which is heaviest whilst they play with pineapples and oranges. Children's creative and physical development are promoted well. For example, they enjoy using their imagination as they make

pretend cups of tea or visit the imaginary shop to buy produce. In addition they are taught how to control their arms well when they add actions to rhymes and songs which they sing from memory.

Opportunities for them to explore the wider world are very good. Children use maps and globes learning where the different continents of the world are. Resources and artefacts enable them to explore first hand, objects from around the world, in turn, this enables them to develop their understanding about diversity. Children achieve well and make good progress towards the six early learning goals as a result of the effective teaching. Enthusiastic staff enable children to become active independent learners as they spark their interest and participation in the wide variety of learning opportunities available everyday. Staff assess children carefully, however, assessment against the EYFS is in its infancy and requires further development to ensure it is consistently adhered to by all key persons, in order for children to continue making good progress.

Children's welfare is paramount. They are secure in the setting both inside and outside. Children are confident and develop warm relationships with staff. Safety equipment, such as, socket covers, door alarms and clear appropriate risk assessments enables the children to play and learn in safety and comfort. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they practise fire safety drills, they learn to handle equipment safely because staff guide them diligently. Staff have completed relevant first aid training which enables them to provide appropriate care for children in the event of a minor accident. Clear systems are in place to ensure that only parents or known carers collect children. A record of visitors is maintained, all identification is checked and visitors are never left unsupervised with the children.

Children behave well. They learn to take turns successfully because staff talk to them and guide them carefully. Healthy snacks and delicious home-cooked meals provide children with a well-balanced diet to support growth and development. Access to drinks throughout the session ensure that no child remains thirsty. Emphasis on developing personal independence is a strength of the school, children see to their personal hygiene, help themselves to snack, set the table for lunch and clear away when they have finished. All children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Documentation) 23/01/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- ensure that daily registers are maintained for children which includes their hours of attendance. (Documentation). 23/01/2009