

St Edmund's Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY431241

Inspection date

20/02/2012

Inspector

Ann Cozzi

Setting address

St Edmund's Montessori, Little Laver Road, HARLOW,
Essex, CM17 0QB

Telephone number

01279 739220

Email

info@stedmundsmontessori.co.uk

Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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 2012

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).

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

St Edmund's Montessori registered in 2011 and operates from a converted church in Matching Green, Harlow, Essex. Children come from the local community and surrounding area. This setting follows a Montessori approach and educational philosophy alongside the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting is open five days a week from 9am until 1pm term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 20 children on roll, of whom 11 are in receipt of early education funding.

The setting employs four members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the Maria Montessori institute.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A well developed knowledge of each child's individual needs enable staff to effectively promote children's welfare and learning. Children are safe and secure and have fun whilst learning about the world around them. Partnerships with parents are excellent and essential in making sure that the needs of all children are met, along with any additional support needs. Partnership with local schools and other professionals are good. Children progress well, given their age, ability and starting points. Regular self-evaluation and ongoing reflective practice by the provider and her staff means that priorities for development are identified and acted on, resulting in provision that responds effectively to the needs of users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further risk assessment to cover anything with which a child may come into contact
- improve the use of observation and assessment, to consistently support the planning and provision of enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences, that are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- develop the use of initial baseline assessment to ensure planning is tailored to meet the individual learning development needs of children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust arrangements are in place to support the protection of children and are known and understood by all staff. There are effective procedures in place for identifying any child at risk of harm, and liaising with the appropriate child agencies. Whilst the provider has undertaken risk assessment inside and outside of the setting there is a minor weakness in regard to ensuring that written assessments fully reflect all safety measures in place. This has no impact on the safety and well-being of children. Children are further safeguarded by robust recruitment and vetting procedures, which includes the induction of all new staff. There are a wide range of policies and procedures in place which effectively support the safe, smooth day-to-day management of the setting.

The environment provided for the care and education of children is safe, supportive and conducive to learning. Furniture, equipment and resources are of a good quality and are used well to achieve the planned goals in learning and development. The provider takes appropriate steps to ensure resources and the environment is sustainable.

Staff appropriately promote equality and diversity by ensuring that their own knowledge about different cultures is up to date. For example, as they provide interesting activities which promote children's understanding of cultural festivals. The provider is improving outcomes for children by taking appropriate steps to close identified achievement gaps. Children's need for additional support is identified as early as possible: with parental permission staff share information and records with colleagues, parents and, where appropriate, with interagency teams to ensure that each child gets the support he or she needs.

The provider has appropriately prioritised the development of partnerships with local schools. This makes a strong contribution towards children's achievement and well-being. The setting has a highly positive relationship with all groups of parents and carers. They are heavily involved along with their children in decision-making on key matters affecting the setting through highly inclusive procedures, including self-evaluation. Suggestions are consistently taken on board by the setting and used to develop and enhance the provision and improve outcomes for children. Parents are extremely well informed about all aspects of their own children's achievement, well-being and development. Staff provide tailored guidance and information about precise ways parents can support their children's learning across different areas.

Self-evaluation involves staff, parents and other partners involved in the care and education of children. It provides the setting with an accurate diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision, reflecting monitoring and analysis that are appropriately rigorous. The provider communicates ambition and drive amongst her staff and as a result effectively secures improvement.

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

The staff at this setting show a good understanding of the learning and development and welfare requirements and Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. This supports children's learning, social, physical and economic well-being. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals and developing personal qualities which help them to learn about taking responsibility for small tasks and develop skills for the future. Whilst staff make regular observations of the children and identify their next steps for learning, there is a lack of consistency when linking this information to future planning. In addition there is a minor weakness in the timescales for the completion of baseline assessments for children who are new to the setting. These weaknesses potentially impact on ensuring that planning is tailored to meet children's individual learning and development needs. Children are well behaved and are able to play well on their own and in harmony with others, they have good relationships with all members of staff, and are confident to approach them for support when needed. Children thrive as a result of the setting they are in.

Children are motivated and interested in a wide range of exciting and interesting activities. They are able to take responsibility for choosing what they do next as they move freely and safely around the setting. Children are provided with lots of creative play opportunities such as painting, role play and access to sand in the outdoor play area. They develop problem solving skills as they work out how to load their sponge with paint, and use this to mark make on paper. They excitedly show the inspector their creation, demonstrating their pride at this achievement. Children demonstrate that they are able to follow simple instructions as they complete a variety of tasks successfully, for example, preparing snacks. They learn social skills, and enjoy being with and talking to adults and their peers. For example, joining in conversations about their thoughts and feelings including, why a snowman melts in the sun. They use their developing imagination to drawing on real or imagined experiences, such as pretending the car they are playing with has become an aeroplane or that 'daddy is a pirate'. Children are able to concentrate for extended periods of time, for example, as they successfully complete an inset puzzle, problem solving as they work out how it fits back together.

Children demonstrate a willingness to keep themselves and others safe through their good behaviour. Most know what is expected of them and can demonstrate a clear understanding of how to stay safe independently of adult prompts. Children develop their understanding of the importance of regular exercise as they, enjoy free-flow play between the indoors and outdoors. They have lots of fun as they play with the wide range of interesting and exciting play opportunities in the very well resourced outdoor play area. Children learn about adopting good personal hygiene routines and the importance of healthy eating.

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	2
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	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	2
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

