

Brightstart Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

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Inspection date

06/03/2012

Inspector

Jane Gay

Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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.

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Description of the setting

Brightstart Montessori Nursery is a well established group which reregistered in new premises in January 2012. The nursery is privately owned and follows the pedagogical and philosophical methodology of Montessori. The provision operates from The Atrium, self-contained premises within the grounds of North Walsham High School in Norfolk. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3.15pm, during term time only. Overnight care is not provided. Children and families who attend travel from the town and surrounding rural area.

The provision employs six members of staff to work with the children. All of the staff team hold relevant early years qualifications, ranging from level 3 through to an early years degree and Qualified Teacher Status. Several are currently studying for the Montessori Diploma at level 4 and the manager has been accepted to study for Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery is highly effective in meeting the needs of children who attend. Children are fully included and supported as unique individuals who are making excellent progress in their learning and development. Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery and benefit greatly from the broad and stimulating range of activities provided. The nursery is able to plan for continuous improvement through appropriate systems of self-evaluation and has excellent capacity to improve. Children are kept safe and most documentation is well maintained.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that information about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility is obtained for every child (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare).
- 06/04/2012

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

- ensure that all policies reflect the practice of the nursery
- continue to develop the two way flow of information with parents to enable

them to support their child's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well protected because all staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and know when to take action to safeguard children in their care. There are effective recruitment and vetting procedures in place and improved appraisals systems which encourage the continued professional development of all staff and their suitability to work with children. Risk assessments for the nursery are comprehensive and the daily checks further ensure the children's safety and, as a result, children play in an environment which is safe and child-centred. The emergency evacuation procedure is practised so staff and children know what to do in the event of an emergency. Staff are responsive to areas for improvement, for example a parent signing to acknowledge a child has received medication during the day, but the policies have not been updated to reflect this improved good practice. However, not all the necessary information is collected about each child.

Resources and equipment are very attractive, clearly labelled and accessible to all children, allowing them to make active choices about their learning. Since the last inspection, the nursery has embedded an effective system of observation and assessment. This means that every child's next steps are identified by their key worker and their individual learning and development needs are well met. Staff encourage children to learn about, and value, differences through a wealth of play opportunities and planned activities.

The nursery shares information with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers and also provides good support to the children as they move onto school. Local school teachers visit them in their familiar nursery environment; this ensures smooth transitions and good continuity of care. Parents are able to access their children's 'learning story' books at any time and contribute to them. They are offered formal consultations with key workers twice a year however, on the recent questionnaires, a few parents asked for more meetings to discuss their child's progress. Informal opportunities for the sharing of information are available at the start and close of each session. Parents speak very highly of the nursery; they praise the 'warm, caring, stimulating environment' and 'the nursery has given him the best start we could ask for'. The nursery manager and staff have a very clear vision for the future and demonstrate an excellent commitment to continuous improvement. Their self-evaluation is enabling them to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision to achieve the best quality outcomes for children.

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

The enthusiastic staff are experienced and well qualified in early years childcare. They listen to the children carefully and engage in sustained shared conversations.

The children are sensitively supported in their choices of activity. The children move calmly around the nursery and engage in challenging activities, indoors and outdoors, promoting their feeling of safety and security. Children are provided with excellent opportunities to participate in exciting and fun activities that enable them to develop across all six areas of learning. They enthusiastically make choices and show high levels of independence, curiosity and imagination. Children spend sustained periods of time at chosen activities, for example, handling the stick insects. They talk about the features of the insects, count the legs and name body parts; they handle them carefully and look closely, sometimes using a magnifying lens.

The quality of teaching is high and staff work patiently and quietly with the children, actively promoting the children's language skills. The children enjoy making buns together in small groups and talk about the ingredients they are using and where they come from. Children are developing excellent skills for the future as they display independence and enjoyment in their learning. Children play together in small groups in the play house, for example, as they dress up and take on familiar family roles together. They discuss and negotiate amicably as they choose what activity they should do next then split into pairs to look at books in the welcoming book area and play on the computer. The nursery makes abundant provision for the children to explore all areas of learning and the Montessori materials provide rich mathematical experiences and opportunities to problem solve.

Children enjoy finding missing letters from simple objects on the computer and ably click the mouse to complete jigsaw pieces. One child kindly offers to help another who asks for help and she patiently explains what needs to be done. The older children are able to point out the letters from their name on the keyboard and others show, with pride, the letters and numbers they have been writing. Counting opportunities are used skilfully by the staff in singing and outside games. Adults ask the children to help them order the numbered stepping stones as they move along their obstacle course and the children count as they aim and throw beanbags. The nursery is developing an attractive outdoor learning environment for the children where they are able to engage in energetic play, climbing, jumping, running and balancing. They also choose to read books quietly in the garden room, chat with friends on the bench, examine the bug den or explore the sand.

Staff have an excellent knowledge of children's needs as they observe, discuss and record information on a regular basis. Key workers use information from observations to plan activities and learning experiences which will promote the next steps in each child's learning and development. Next steps are displayed to enable all staff to identify possible learning opportunities for every child. The children's 'learning stories' provide excellent records of each child's learning and development and children are very proud of their achievements as they talk about what is recorded in their book. Some parents have added information about the child themselves for example, a trip to 'Africa Alive'.

Adults in the nursery act as exceptional role models for the children and have high expectations of behaviour. The children respond to this and, consequently, are

polite to adults and their peers, showing respect for others. The children develop a strong sense of security and feel safe with the adults around them. Children are sensitively supported when they start at the nursery and staff take time to find out about them as they meet with the parents. Children display high levels of confidence and self-esteem and develop an understanding of other people's needs. They learn to share, take turns and respect each other; behaviour is excellent. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world as they have opportunities to explore other cultures, such as Africa, using stories and artefacts, and they talk about habitats and seasons. Children draw pictures of some trees and say, 'It's winter on my picture'. When asked how they know this they say, 'Because the leaves are off all the trees'.

The nursery provides a healthy and nutritious variety of snacks and hot meals are available from the high school on site. Most children have an awareness of the need to wash hands after toileting, or messy activities and before eating and staff are prompt to remind them. The children show great independence as they pour their drinks from a jug and put their cups and plates away when they have finished; many are able to dress themselves for outside play, and others are actively taught these skills.

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	1

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	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	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

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	2
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