

# Buttercup Montessori Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY434861  
**Inspection date** 08/05/2012  
**Inspector** Susan Ennis

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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

Buttercup Montessori Kindergarten originally opened in 2001 and re-registered as a limited company in 2011. It operates from six rooms in a converted residential property, situated in the Galleywood area of Chelmsford, Essex. There is a ramp leading to the entrance door and toilets are accessible. A secure enclosed area is available for outdoor play.

The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm, for 52 weeks of the year excluding bank holidays. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 64 children in the early years age range. There are currently 159 children on roll. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions and come from the local and wider community. The nursery is in receipt of nursery education funding. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The nursery follows the Montessori principles for early years education.

The setting employs 28 members of staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications including the manager. The nursery receives support from the local authority early years partnership.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The commitment and dedication demonstrated by the whole nursery team enable them to offer an outstanding standard of care to all children. Children clearly thrive and make consistent progress as the nursery has developed strong practices and procedures for planning, assessing and promoting their learning. Staff value diversity and are highly successful in ensuring that children's uniqueness and individuality is recognised. Dedicated partnerships with parents contribute significantly to ensuring that the individual needs of each child are fully met. Strong leadership, including rigorous monitoring of practice and robust self-evaluation systems, ensure that plans for the future are well targeted to have the greatest impact for 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:

- enhancing the use of information gained to further demonstrate children's progress towards the early learning goals.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The nursery demonstrates a consistently high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. Staff have a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues to ensure that children's welfare is prioritised. All staff attend training in child protection and are fully aware of the contact numbers required for reporting concerns should they arise. Extensive and robust recruitment and vetting procedures, including the induction of new staff, ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. A rolling program of training builds on their childcare knowledge. Children's well-being is meticulously enhanced by the exceptional organisation of the nursery and the comprehensive policies and procedures in place, including those with regard to risk assessments and visitors to the setting. Each room, within the nursery, has a file containing photographs of those people likely to collect the children. If they are not recognised at the door the file is checked for their identity and only when staff are secure that they are releasing the child to the correct person are they allowed to leave the nursery.

The nursery consistently and actively promotes equality and diversity and tackles unfair discrimination. All children receive highly committed levels of support and stimulation to help them progress and reach their potential. The nursery's dedication to building trusting and professional relationships with parents ensures that children are consistently cared for. Parents are exceptionally well informed about all aspects of their child's achievements, well-being and development and are encouraged to be fully included in the process. Day books and wipe boards ensure they are aware of the activities taking place during the day. Parents evenings are also held to enable them to discuss their child's development in more detail. They are encouraged to share their child's achievements from home and newsletters inform them of future themes and topics. Parents also become involved when 'Dogger' the nursery soft toy is brought home for a sleepover with their child. They enthusiastically help complete his journal and take photographs of him, for example, visiting New York at Christmas and the Houses of Parliament in Ottawa. Parents are encouraged to have very open relationships with the manager and staff team. They make themselves available to talk to parents at all times through their very visible presence on a day to day basis or through contact via text messages and mobiles. The nursery is highly committed to working in partnership with other agencies, professionals and settings involved in a child's lives. There are well-established channels of communication that successfully promote children's learning and welfare.

The nursery provides a highly vibrant, stimulating environment which is consistently conducive to children's learning. The walls are brightly decorated with a rich and varied selection of posters, photographs and examples of children's work. For example, a dinosaur made from their hand prints is displayed in the knowledge and understanding room. Exceptional use is made of the outside play area covering a full range of inspiring and exciting experiences for all the children. For example, they enhance their problem solving as they experiment to see how much water they need to put into the top of the drain pipe maze to make it flow out of the bottom. They record the date and weather on the wall chart provided

and measure how much water has been caught in the rain catcher. They are encouraged to use the outside area in all weathers with clear umbrellas provided to enable them to watch and listen to the rain over head.

All staff at the nursery are passionate about their roles and have very high aspirations for the quality and care the setting provides. Their infectious enthusiasm and passion enables them to provide a consistently high standard of care. Self-evaluation at all levels reflects rigorous monitoring and analysis of what the nursery does well and what it needs to improve on. As a result, actions taken have an outstanding impact in bringing about sustained improvement to the early years provision.

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

Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning because staff use their expert knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Montessori ethos to extend their learning and development. The exceptional organisation of the education program ensures that children receive rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meet their needs exceedingly well. Thorough settling-in procedures and initial assessments ensure that staff are aware of children's interests and capabilities. Comprehensive observations and assessments then enable staff to build on what the children know and plan for their continued development. However, more consolidated details about children's overall progress towards the early learning goals would enhance the process further.

The exceptional range of child-initiated and adult-led activities ensure that children's interests and knowledge are continually extended. Staff know the children extremely well and are highly motivated in meeting their individual needs. For example, younger children develop their sense of size as they open their arms out wide to receive the teddy held in front of them by staff. Older children practise their mark-making skills as they choose to use the wipe boards and markers, whilst their friends learn to take turns as they play their favourite 'tummy ache' board game. Children develop their creative skills as they make spiders from black paper and follow the shapes and glitter floating in bottles of water. They enjoy singing along to 'Jolly phonics' and develop their life skills as they experiment with zips and cylinders.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and show high levels of independence, curiosity and concentration. They forge friendships with staff and each other and their behaviour is excellent. They follow the exceptionally positive role modelling of staff and learn the expectations in place. 'Tilly' the persona doll is also actively used to approach subjects such as kind hands and sharing. Staff vibrantly help the children learn about the society in which they live and the wider world. Celebrations of festivals are built into the planning and resources such as puzzles, books and dolls, help them develop a further understanding of different ways of life. Parents are also very keen to share their culture with the children and regularly visit the nursery to talk about festivals, for example, Chinese New Year and Diwali.

Children's health and welfare are extremely successfully promoted. Staff take active steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of healthy living. Children show an exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines as even the younger children know to put their used tissue in the bin. They are learning where food comes from as they grow herbs in their classroom and participate in regular cooking activities. All meals are freshly prepared at the nursery and the cook is very inventive with regard to including hidden vegetables, for example, in the tomato sauce. Weekly dance and music sessions superbly encourage children's physical development as they enthusiastically throw scrunched up silk scarves into the air to watch them unfold and land on their heads. Children are made extremely aware of their own safety and that of their friends. They know to hold onto the child-level banister when using the stairs and that they must listen for their name during the practising of the fire drill. Discussions about bicycle helmets and seat belts increase their understanding of the need for safety precautions when out and about.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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