

Milton Hall Montessori School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Marvet Gayle

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Milton Hall Montessori School registered under the current owner in 2005. It operates from two rooms in the Social Hall in Englefield Green, Surrey. There is a secure outside play area available. The school employs six staff to work with the children, most of whom hold relevant qualifications. It is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 36 children and there are currently 47 children on roll. It opens five days a week during school term times from 9am until 3.30pm. The school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language. It follows Montessori principles and receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning and development and they demonstrate an eagerness to learn. A dedicated management team inspire the committed and focused staff effectively. Together they have an excellent knowledge of children's individual needs and promote most aspects of welfare and learning successfully. An effective self-evaluation process takes full account of the views of staff, children, parents, carers and outside professionals to develop practice further. The school is meeting all actions and recommendations identified at the last inspection, showing a strong capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the variety of daily activities in the outdoor area to provide a richer and more stimulating learning environment
- develop greater consistency in the staff team's understanding of implementing the safeguarding children policy and procedure.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The steps taken to safeguard children are good. Risk assessment is extensive and works effectively in practice, promoting good levels of safety on the premises and on outings. There are commendable systems in place that promote children's good health and well-being, including effective steps to prevent the spread of infection and disease. Staff maintain extensive and very well organised documentation, which they regularly review. These procedures promote the safe and efficient management of the school. Systems to monitor the suitability of staff and students

are robust as all adults are checked and records verified. Staff have a generally good understanding of safeguarding children procedures. However, there is a minor inconsistency in the staff team's knowledge of implementing the school's safeguarding policy.

The management team, staff and parents work well together to identify and drive forward improvements through evaluating practices and completing self-evaluation processes successfully. They clearly identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. They are meeting previous recommendations and actions effectively, which improves outcomes for children. Teamwork is excellent due to good communication and frequent meetings to discuss training and development needs. Staff receive good support to attend on-going training to increase their knowledge and skills.

The school offers a very inclusive setting committed to high quality care and education. Staff meet children's individual welfare and learning needs well, and work closely with parents to do so. Equality and diversity is at the heart of staff practice. For instance, the excellent Individual Educational Plan system promptly and highly effectively identifies support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The unique educational programmes support all children's learning about diversity in very meaningful and valuable ways. As a result, children develop an excellent knowledge of different cultures, such as costumes relating to their celebrations of the Festival of Eid.

Staff use resources effectively in the indoor environment, providing activities that combine all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Montessori curriculum successfully. Resources outdoors are less comprehensive, which has some limitations in fully promoting a rich and stimulating environment. Staff use their time well to support children effectively.

All aspects of working in partnerships with parents are good. A daily exchange of verbal and documented information promotes good consistency in children's welfare and learning. There are effective systems that ensure parents work in partnership with the school to extend and develop aspects of children's health, welfare and learning. For instance, parents are currently providing weekly fresh fruit contributions, effectively supporting healthy eating initiatives within the school. Staff gather pertinent information about children's starting points and their developing interests, which successfully inform their individual plans and goals for learning. Regular formal and informal meetings, such as a parents' information evening, allow parents and carers to review and discuss children's progress and contribute ideas to the school. The school has strong systems in place to support transitions between settings, with an informative record of children's progress and achievements compiled to enhance continuity of care and education.

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

Children appear to be happy and they enjoy learning in a safe and nurturing environment. They make good progress in relation to their starting points and are confident and independent learners. They make their own decisions about learning and this enables them to follow their own interests. The school provides a good programme of well-organised activities covering the Montessori curriculum, with clear links to the Early Years Foundation Stage. A single activity from start to finish, such as baking, sorting, painting, or preparing snacks, reflects all areas of learning and ensures that children achieve high outcomes in their development.

Children use a very good range of resources, play materials and books that reflect diversity, different cultures and disability. There are very good systems in place to ensure regular and planned discussions with the children. Children enjoy a wide range of activities and experiences that promote understanding of their own and other's backgrounds. In addition, children learn to respect and value the diverse community in which they live.

Children are secure, confident and frequently demonstrate good levels of independence. The staff team implements a good system of observation and planning. For instance, staff observe children on a daily basis and maintain thorough records of their achievements and progress. They use these records effectively to identify next steps in learning for individual children and to guide planning. Children's ability to play well with each other is a key strength of the school. They engage with each other successfully in learning and discovery. For instance, children use glass jugs with water to examine measurement as they pretend to have a tea party.

Staff are knowledgeable at knowing when and how to interact with the children, offering support and useful questioning to develop children's knowledge and understanding. In addition, their ability to adapt practice in order to take account of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language, is very effective. They are flexible and inclusive, ensuring all children progress at their pace and level of ability. Children's literary and number skills are developing very well. For example, many recognise and know the sounds of letters, and are clearly securing the skills they need for their future learning.

Children develop a good appreciation of a healthy lifestyle and enjoy playing in the fresh air as part of a healthy lifestyle; however, the potential of the outside area is not fully realised. Staff sensitively discuss risks and hazards with children as part of their cooking activity. As a result, children learn about manageable risks, such as the dangers of a hot oven, which supports their understanding of safety successfully. Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks, which helps them to learn how food contributes to good health. Children's behaviour is very good and they confidently share and take turns. Staff encourage them to think about their behaviour and to make choices successfully, so that they do not hurt others either

physically or verbally.

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	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	2
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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

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