

The Montessori Children's House

34 Robin Hood Lane, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 2RG

Inspection date	10/10/2012
Previous inspection date	07/07/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children make good progress in their learning and development in relation to their individual starting points.
- An effective key person system enables children to become familiar with a specific adult who supports the smooth transition between home and the setting. Children grow in confidence through the good levels of support provided by them.
- Staff make good use of the classroom and the outdoor area to create rich and varied learning opportunities for children.
- Strong partnerships with parents enable them to be fully involved in their child's learning and share information about their child's progress at home. This information is successfully used along with the key person's assessment to plan the next steps in children's learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Some staff are not always consistent in their approach to enabling children to use resources together in different ways.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children involved in a variety of activities in the classroom and garden.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager in the outside area.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision.
- The inspector sampled documentation including some of the policies and procedures, staff recruitment files, children's assessments and planning.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Lorraine Sparey

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Montessori Children's House opened in 2003 and is privately owned. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting operates from a large hall (classroom) which has its own kitchen and toilets with nappy changing facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The setting

is open Monday to Friday during term time from 8.45am until 3.15pm. Children may attend on a sessional or full-time basis. There are currently 35 children on roll and all of these are in the early years age group. The setting supports children who are learning English as an additional language. A team of seven staff, including the owner/manager and deputy manager work with the children. Of these, six staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Most staff have a Montessori diploma and two have a degree in early years. Dance and French sessions are provided each week by external tutors. The setting is committed to the Montessori teaching methods and principles.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- provide time, space and materials for children to collaborate with one another in different ways, for example, as they engage in small world play.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children clearly enjoy their time in the nursery. They say 'good morning' as they arrive, shaking the manager's hand. There is an effective key person system in operation to support all children with settling in and developing good relationships. Consequently, most children are happy and motivated in their learning. Staff use the Montessori teaching methods and ethos to support children in making good progress in all areas of their learning and development. The educational programme provided covers all areas of children's learning, both in the classroom and the outdoor area. Children are confident to move between the areas depending on what they choose to play with. Staff provide good levels of support, encouraging the children to independently select the Montessori equipment from the low-level shelves. Children show good control as they move around the classroom carrying the equipment safely. Staff praise their choices and extend their learning through suggesting additional equipment. For example, a child makes a line of glass beads on a mat. The staff member encourages them to count and then suggests the child finds the number rods to measure the beads. When the child successfully identifies the correct length, the member of staff removes some beads and suggests the child tries again. The child clearly enjoys the activity. In general, staff are consistent in their approach. However, at times some staff are inconsistent in their approach about how children can use the equipment. For example, some children move away from the mat that a toy garage is on to the other side of the garden, taking toy cars with them. They initiate their own play by rolling the cars down the path. However, staff ask other children

to return the cars to the mat, which means they occasionally receive mixed messages about how they can use the equipment.

Children's language is developing well. Several children listen to a story with interest and a member of staff actively encourages them to share what they know about the various creatures in the book. For example, this is evidence as they talk about a bat and a child tells a member of staff 'they are black with wings and they hang upside down'. The member of staff extends children's learning by asking whether we see them during the day. Another child says 'no, it's at night time'. Children are confident to share their ideas with a visiting adult. During an activity, a child finds different letters and then copies them, writing in the sand. They tell the adult the name of the letter and the sound it makes. Other children enjoy moulding dough into different shapes. A child proudly shows off a flower, explaining what they have made.

The nursery has a large proportion of children who are learning English as an additional language. There are good systems in place to support these children in learning English and respecting and valuing their home languages. Parents provide familiar words and phrases on the registration form. Staff use gestures and words in the children's home language to support them in becoming competent in English.

All staff plan together incorporating their own key children's next steps in their learning and development. They complete various observations and take photographs of children involved in activities to support these assessments. Staff plan activities taking into account children's interests to help them make good progress. They demonstrate through discussion a good understanding of where their key children are in their development and the next steps for the individual child. As a result, all children are making good progress in their learning and development. All staff are aware of the requirement to complete a progress check when children are aged between two and three years. Staff and management have devised new forms and intend to begin the process when the child initially starts at the setting. Staff feel this is a positive initiative and are keen to start this process.

There are good systems in place to involve parents in their child's learning. They have regular meetings and discussions with their child's key person where there are encouraged to share the child's progress at home. Staff use this information in the planning to enable children to make maximum progress and develop good skills for their future learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are developing good relationships with staff and other children. Staff greet them warmly as they arrive in the nursery supporting the smooth changeover from home and promoting children's well-being. The majority of children settle quickly into activities of their choice and staff are skilled at promoting children's independence. In general children behave well. They keep the environment tidy by automatically putting a chosen activity away once they have completed it to their satisfaction. If they have used a mat they roll it up and put it back ready for other children to use. Children are polite and well-mannered

and respond well to staff who are positive role models in the way they speak to the children and each other. Children are encouraged to listen to others. Staff use praise and encouragement to enable children to learn the boundaries and expectations. As a result, children respond well and develop good manners, for example, by holding doors open for other children.

Children learn to use the equipment safely and move around the classroom with care. The manager talks to the children at group time about safety. She invites children to show others how to walk around the environment and how to use the equipment safely. For example, a child sits at the table showing the other children how to pour water from the glass jug into their cup safely. Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through a range of activities including dance. Children move their bodies pretending they are various animals and outline imaginary pictures in the air using large movements with their arms. Children benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks and a choice of milk or water to drink. They bring their own packed lunch and staff and children sit together and talk about healthy foods. As a result, lunchtime is a good social occasion where children learn about healthy eating.

Staff provide a broad range of good quality equipment. Most equipment links to the Montessori approach. Children are confident and independent, freely choosing what they wish to play with for themselves. If a child is not fully engaged in an activity a member of staff provides alternative suggestions. For example, a member of staff notices a child is wandering in the outside area not playing with any of the resources. She suggests they might like to get some water and use the paint brushes to make marks on the large blackboards. The child spends considerable time making patterns and marks, clearly enjoying themselves.

Staff prepare children well for the next stage in their learning. Management and staff work closely with other early years provisions including local schools to enable them to help children be prepared. A parent comments that her other children have attended the nursery and she has been impressed by how well prepared they were for school.

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

The manager is a strong leader and encourages all staff to be involved in planning a rich and varied curriculum. All staff review children's progress to make sure each and every child receives an enjoyable experience. The manager deploys effectively to support every child and the team work well together. There are good systems in place to make sure that all children are making good progress and that staff are narrowing the gap in children's achievements.

All staff and management demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children. There are effective policies and procedures in place to provide a safe and secure environment. These include procedures for following up any concerns with regard to child protection. Staff attend training to keep their knowledge and skills up

to date. Thorough and detailed risk assessments identify any potential hazards, such as, children using china and glass equipment. As a result, staff make sure children are supervised and use the equipment safely. In addition, they have made safety books to enable children to look at photographs to support them in using equipment safely. There are effective recruitment procedures in place. This enables management to make sure staff have the appropriate qualifications and are suitable to work with children. Good induction procedures and annual appraisals provide opportunities for the management and staff to evaluate their practice and identify any training needs. Staff also benefit from regular meetings and individual review meetings.. All staff attend training through the local authority and the Montessori Association. In addition they have regular in-house training. As a result, the staff team continually develop their knowledge, skills and practice to promote effective outcomes for children.

There are good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision. These include regular meetings with other early years providers and schools to discuss good practice. Advisory staff from the local authority visit and provide opportunities to critically evaluate the provision. Parent questionnaires provide valuable insight into their views and ideas. As a result, from their suggestions, the book corner has been reorganised to provide a cosy and comfortable area for children to look at books independently. As a result, the views of staff, parents and others are valued and help to inform decision-making process.

Partnerships with parents are strong within the Montessori nursery. Staff talk to parents about their families to enable discussions with the children about home events. Parents state that 'communication is good and that their children are well prepared for school'. They feel that the children are 'confident' and 'staff welcome each stage in children's development'. There are good systems in place to share information with other early years settings, although there are no currently no children attending to whom this applies. Staff meet regularly with other early years providers and professionals at training courses and link meetings. As a result, this helps to develop staff practices and improve the quality of provision for children.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY248359
Local authority	Sutton
Inspection number	884609
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	30

Number of children on roll	35
Name of provider	The Montessori Children's House Ltd
Date of previous inspection	07/07/2009
Telephone number	020 8652 5662

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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