

# Smiths Children Montessori St Luke's Church

St Luke's Church (United Reformed with Church of England), Victoria Road, CAMBRIDGE, Cambridgeshire, CB4 3DZ

<b>Inspection date</b>	07/01/2013
Previous inspection date	30/05/2012

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

### **This provision is inadequate**

- Monitoring of the educational programme is weak; observations and assessments are not consistent or accurate enough to plan challenging experiences for all children. As a result, activities lack interest, which sometimes leads to unwanted behaviour.
- The hours children attend are not accurately recorded, which affects children's safety in the event of an emergency.
- Self-evaluation is not good enough to enable the provider to effectively identify and focus on the weaknesses in the provision.
- Inconsistencies in adults' understanding of the learning and development requirements limit children's learning. In addition, staff deployment does not always ensure younger children and babies receive adequate support. This affects their learning and development.

### **It has the following strengths**

- Food is healthy and nutritious and promotes children's good health.
- Staff reflect the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the families who attend. This means families and children feel welcome and have good opportunities to communicate in their home language.

## 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.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke with the provider at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector observed children and staff interactions throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed documentation, including children's learning and development records, policies and procedures, accidents and medication records.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents through reading testimonials and some of the daily diaries.

## Inspector

Veronica Sharpe

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Smith's Children's Montessori St Luke's Church nursery was registered in 2011 and is privately owned. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and accepts children from birth to five years of age. It is located in the St Luke's Community Church close to Cambridge city centre. Children have use of a large first floor group room, with a sleep room, toilets and kitchen down one flight of stairs. A lift provides access to the first floor. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play. There are currently 36 children on roll within the early years age range who attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery

offers early years funding for two-, three- and four-year-olds. There are several children attending who have English as an additional language.

Opening times are 8am until 6pm each weekday. The nursery is open all year round with the exception of one week at Christmas and all bank holidays. There are 11 staff working directly with the children. Two of these hold qualifications at level 3 and three hold qualifications at level 2. One member of staff is having an overseas level 6 qualification accredited. Three members of staff are working towards a qualification at level 3, one is working towards level 2. Two members of staff are working towards a Montessori diploma.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

#### **To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- improve the delivery of the educational programme by implementing a systematic approach to planning and assessment to ensure all areas of learning are covered in sufficient depth and breadth to provide interest and challenge
- make precise and regular observations on individual children and use them effectively to accurately monitor their progress to ensure they reach their expected levels of development
- ensure all staff have the appropriate training, skills and knowledge to develop effective teaching to enable them to: guide children's development through warm and positive interactions; provide children with challenging and motivating learning experiences
- keep a daily record of children's hours of attendance.
- where children are provided with meals ensure any information from parents about allergies or special dietary needs is recorded and acted upon

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

- develop self-evaluation systems in order to drive improvement including monitoring the education programmes to ensure a broad range of experiences to help children make progress
- review staff deployment to ensure that babies and younger children receive consistent and appropriate support.

### **Inspection judgements**

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

Not all staff have a secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the nursery and children's learning needs are not adequately met. Although some staff use observations to collect information about children's interests and learning styles, there are significant inconsistencies in practice. Monitoring of staff practice is ineffective in addressing these inconsistencies. This means children's activities do not reflect their individual learning needs and therefore lack interest and challenge. Additionally there is no effective method to review children's starting points and monitor their progress towards the early learning goals. Although there are some written plans displayed, these are out-of-date and do not, therefore, reflect children's current interests or abilities. Staff collect information from parents about their children's interests when they first start. This enables staff to gather initial starting points. However, because planning and assessment is weak, these have little impact on the staff's ability to plan motivating learning experiences for all children. Each child has a daily diary, which is completed by their child's key person. This gives parents a suitable understanding of their children's welfare, and activities they have enjoyed.

A suitable environment is provided where children can help themselves to some of the toys and resources to support their play. Older children have access to some high quality Montessori equipment, such as matching and sorting toys. However, because staff have a limited understanding of Montessori teaching, they do not model effective use of them, and therefore, these resources have little learning value. Consequently children soon lose interest and move on to other toys. Children in all areas enjoy looking at books and join in with story times. They show an understanding of familiar songs and rhymes, and can anticipate which little piggy's house will blow down next. Children's language development is adequately fostered because staff talk to the children as they play and encourage friendly conversation. Staff come from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, and this enables them to effectively communicate with the children who have English as an additional language. This helps these children to feel welcomed and valued.

Children in all areas benefit from suitable mark making experiences, for example, babies do finger painting. Older children have independent access to colouring pencils and felt-tips. This means they have some suitable opportunities to develop their early writing skills. Because staff lack teaching skills, they do not always know when to extend children's learning experiences. For example, they do not spontaneously offer older children spades when they show an interest in digging in the garden. Younger children show an interest in technology as they listen to music on a compact disc player, and operate the controls to turn the volume up. Children enjoy staff's response to this as they encourage the children to dance and are playful with them.

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

Parents visit with their children to settle them in and get to know their key person. As a result, children are generally settled and content. Staff know about babies' individual routines for food and sleep and respect parents' views on comforters and dummies. This helps to ensure children feel secure. The nursery environment is suitably welcoming, with a reasonable range of resources and furniture to support children's different needs. For example, younger babies sleep in comfortable cots. Staff regularly check the toys and resources to ensure children play safely.

Children are encouraged to be active and play outdoors at set times during the day. They enjoy active games, and some staff engage with them and play games, such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?'. A small selection of wheeled toys enables children to develop their skills in pedalling and manoeuvring. Children benefit from regular outings to the nearby play park, and to the river to watch the ducks. This adequately supports their physical health and their understanding of the world. Other outdoor play experiences are limited because there is no clear planning to support staff in providing stimulating outdoor learning.

Children learn suitable hygiene procedures because staff encourage them to wash their hands. Older children show some independence in their self-care, for example, they take off their own coats and shoes after outdoor play. This helps to prepare them for the next stage in their learning. Meals are freshly prepared and cooked on site. Food is plentiful and served in appropriate quantities to meet children's nutritional needs. Children enjoy healthy snacks and older children take an active part in food preparation, so they develop some understanding of healthy foods. At lunch time younger children and babies sit together with adults and enjoy a relaxed and sociable occasion. Older children, though, spend too much time waiting for their food and become restless and distracted.

Generally, children's behaviour is acceptable. They are polite and friendly and most older children show a suitable understanding of sharing and turn taking. However, lack of stimulation sometimes leads to unwanted behaviour, such as throwing resources, or aimless running about. Practitioners lack confidence in dealing with such situations, as a result, they do not fully support children in learning to behave well in groups and respect the feelings of others.

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

Lack of self-evaluation means key weaknesses, particularly in learning and development, have not been identified and addressed. Although the provider is aware of some of the areas for development, an effective improvement plan has not been implemented. Consequently, the educational provision is poor and recommendations made at the last inspection have not been met. Monitoring of staff performance is not good enough, resulting in inconsistent practice and gaps in staff's knowledge of the learning and development requirements. As a result, children are not sufficiently challenged and motivated and fail to make good progress. The provider has instigated appraisals for staff so training needs can be identified, and a new manager has been recruited. However,

these changes have not had time to impact positively on children's outcomes.

Recruitment procedures adequately ensure staff are safe and suitable to work with the children. Initial induction means they know about their responsibilities, such as conducting daily safety checks of the garden so that children play in a secure environment. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding children procedures and some have attended training to ensure their knowledge is up-to-date. This helps to adequately minimise the risk of child abuse. Most of the required documentation is in place, such as accident records and children's personal information. However, the daily record of the children being cared for on the premises does not include the times of children's attendance, which affects children's safety in an emergency. The provider was unable to locate a copy of the fire log during the inspection; however, staff say they practise the emergency evacuation at intervals. This adequately promotes children's safety in the event of a fire.

The provider understands about the benefits of sharing information to aid consistency for children who attend more than one setting. She has initiated contact with local schools so the children can be supported appropriately when the time comes for them to move into reception classes. Partnership working with other professionals and agencies is established. This enables staff to signpost parents to specific services, such as the speech and language therapists at the local children's centre, when appropriate. Parents write testimonials that comment positively on the care their children receive. They mention their satisfaction with the activities on offer and say that staff are kind and caring. The provider makes it possible for parents to join in social events, which is beneficial as it helps children and their families make friends. The nursery website gives parents useful information about the nursery provision, such as the policies and procedures, changes and special events. This keeps parents up-to-date with nursery life.

This inspection took place as the result of concerns being raised about staffing ratios and the procedures for meeting the needs of children with allergies. The provider demonstrated that staffing ratios are consistently maintained to meet the requirements for the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, staff deployment is not always effective enough to ensure babies and younger children have consistent adult support. For example, staff spend time away from the play areas, settling children to sleep, or changing nappies. Clear information is collected from parents about allergies, and this information is displayed to ensure all staff are aware of any special dietary needs. All staff spoken with at the inspection demonstrated that they follow parents' wishes regarding children's individual dietary needs. There has been an instance where the provider is not sure whether children have been exposed to food they are allergic to. Although appropriate care was given to the children after the event, this compromises children's health and safety.

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY437969
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	899806
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5

<b>Total number of places</b>	45
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	36
<b>Name of provider</b>	Smiths Children
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30/05/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 301 047

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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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