

The Old School House Montessori Nursery

The Old School House, De Montfort Road, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1SP

Inspection date	26/03/2013
Previous inspection date	17/03/2011

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	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1	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

- Staff place a very good emphasis on healthy lifestyles. Children develop a very good understanding of healthy eating and increase their physical skills through exciting activities.
- Management places a high priority on protecting children's welfare. As a result children stay very safe.
- Management pays good attention to staff development, implementing a thorough supervision and appraisal system. This helps to ensure the nursery has a good-quality workforce who effectively support children's learning and care.
- Children show they feel safe and develop secure emotional attachments with the staff.

It is not yet outstanding because

- on occasions some staff over-direct children during adult-led activities and do not fully enable them to independently use materials and equipment, which has an impact on their play and exploration.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 majority of inspection time was spent observing the staff and children in all main playrooms and the outside play area.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including childrens information, development records and attendance records, along with the safeguarding policy and documentation regarding complaints.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and various members of staff throughout the inspection.
- The inspector gathered the views of parents and carers through discussion with three parents.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Jacqueline Walter

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Old School House Nursery registered in 2003. It operates from three rooms of a renovated school building in Lewes, East Sussex and follows Montessori teaching methods. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm full year, with the exception of bank holidays and a week at Christmas. All children share access to an outside play area and a garden.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 109 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery is in receipt of early education funding for children aged three and four years.

The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 14 staff; of these, 12 hold an appropriate early years qualification. There are two member of staff working towards a recognised childcare qualification. One member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- support further young children's growing independence and motivation; for example, by encouraging them to make their own decisions about what they do, how they do it and what they play with.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff provide a wide range of stimulating activities and good quality teaching to successfully promote children's development in all areas of learning. For example, young children enjoy using their senses to explore different textures and materials such as oats and spring bulbs. Children delight in practising physical skills during a variety of activities. For example, they eagerly tackle obstacle courses and enjoy circle games in the outside area. They develop good coordination skills by using knives safely when spreading and chopping ingredients for their home-made pizzas. Children have good opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination as they enthusiastically engage in role-play games about going on holiday, while packing travelling bags of different sizes. This also supports

their mathematical development as they develop an understanding of space, shape and measure.

Staff encourage babies' and young children's communication and speech effectively by introducing and repeating words. Staff use lots of open-ended questions with older children to extend their communication and language skills. During role-play activities staff ask questions, such as 'where are you going on holiday and 'what will you do?'. This effectively encourages children to think, predict and use words to communicate. Staff successfully build on opportunities for children to play with materials before using them in planned tasks. For example, children are able to explore soil and seeds before planting. This encourages them to make links in their learning and develop understanding of the natural world. However, on some occasions, staff become over directive, particularly when engaging in creative activities with younger children, This has an impact on the children's growing independence and motivation to learn and succeed.

Staff know the children well and use information from observation to make sure that each child achieves as much as they can. They identify children's starting points and complete regular observations and summaries on what children know and can do. These reflect all areas of learning and help staff to identify the children's next steps and implement planning for the day-to-day provision. Staff effectively use information from observations to complete individual learning plans for each child. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and in turn acquire the skills, attitudes and dispositions they need to be ready for school or their next stage of learning. Staff appropriately complete the required progress check for children aged between two and three years to monitor their development in key areas such as personal and social, and physical development.

Parents are very involved in their children's learning. Staff regularly share information regarding the children's care, achievements and how learning can be supported at home. This enhances children's learning through play. In addition to this, planning is put on display in the hallway, giving parents good opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas on activities. Parents also successfully contribute to their child's development by sharing their child's interests at home. This, in turn, allows staff to consolidate and extend children's learning in the nursery. Staff value parents' expertise and effectively use it to support children's understanding of different cultures. For example, children enjoy a slide show, shared by a parent, about a Norwegian festival, helping them to understand more about the social world around them. Children also bring in their national costume and enjoy naming the different parts. Children who speak other languages have good opportunities to use them in the nursery. For example, staff greet children in their home language to encourage its use and promote inclusion.

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

Children are happy and display confidence in talking and playing with staff. For example, children confidently tell staff of their wants and needs. The majority of children demonstrate they feel safe and content when leaving their parents. Staff are quick to offer cuddles to a child if they become unsettled, reassuring them and distracting them with

activities so they feel more secure. As a result they too settle quickly. There is an effective key person system in place, which includes a buddy system when the key person is not available. This provides continuity and consistency of care for the children. Staff implement effective strategies to help settle new children in. For example, they encourage parents to participate in settling-in visits and gather information about the children's interests at home. This enables them to have a good understanding of children's individual needs or routines and effectively meet them.

Positive strategies help staff promote children's good behaviour. Staff are good role models and young children benefit from their use of praise and encouragement. This promotes their self-confidence and esteem. They support older children's learning well by encouraging them to share and take turns in their activities. They also sensitively deal with any inappropriate behaviour. For example, when children draw on other children's work, they discuss the reasons why it is unacceptable and encourage empathy with the other child. Consequently, children are developing a good understanding of how to behave.

There is a very good emphasis on healthy lifestyles and children are developing a good understanding about healthy eating through exciting activities. For example, they make home-made soup after visiting a local greengrocer's to buy the vegetables. Staff talk about the benefits of eating healthy food, such as peppers and mushrooms, during baking activities. Consequently, children know these help them to be healthy. Children are physically active and have good opportunities to play outside. They engage in regular routines that promote good hygiene. For example, they wash their hands before meals and help to wipe the tables after their meals.

Children are developing a good understanding of how to keep safe on outings. They discuss safety procedures at circle time and know they need to hold on to a rope to stay together as they walk. Staff maintain very detailed medication records and keep parents appropriately informed of any infectious conditions that may affect the children. These measures contribute to the children's good health and safety.

The learning environment is effective in helping all children progress towards the early learning goals. Staff provide a child-friendly environment, organising space and resources well to promote children's play and exploration. Children can also move freely into the outside play environment. This gives good opportunities for choice and decision-making skills.

Staff successfully help children prepare for moves within the nursery so they feel happy and secure. Children gather confidence and familiarity by spending several sessions in their new age group with their original key person. Staff share children's development records with their new staff and they invite parents in to discuss and meet their children's new key person. These strategies effectively help the children feel confident when they ultimately move on to school.

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

The management team has a clear understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. Arrangements for safeguarding children and protecting their welfare are well established and effective. Staff have a good awareness of the welfare and safeguarding requirements. They understand and provide a safe indoor and outside environment for children. Staff maintain children's safety by conducting and implementing written risk assessments on outings and for the premises. The leadership team uses very robust recruitment and vetting procedures to appoint staff, making sure they are suitable to work with children. For example, before employment candidates attend various play sessions. This helps to ensure they have the ability to interact effectively with children and demonstrate sound knowledge and skills. This means children are very safe.

Leadership and management have rigorous and effective systems for self-evaluation that help them to inform the nursery's priorities. They use these to create action plans and set challenging targets for improvement in the outcomes for children. For example, they have provided robots and digital cameras to extend opportunities for children to explore technology resources. The nursery values parents' views and fully takes account of them to help drive improvement in their partnership working and care of the children. For example, staff have introduced daily diaries, which give parents further details about their children's food intake and what they have been doing during the day.

Annual appraisals take place for staff to enable them to effectively identify training needs and secure opportunities for professional development. This helps drive improvement within the nursery and therefore benefits the children. The management implements very good supervision opportunities for staff to discuss any issues concerning children's development or well-being. This helps to ensure the staff appropriately support children's individual needs.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff provide good information for parents using notice boards and welcome packs, which include the nursery's policies and procedures. This helps everyone be aware of their responsibilities. Parents are extremely happy with the care and learning provided for their children. They state that their children are always eager to come to the nursery and that staff provide stimulating activities. They also feel that they are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning.

Children benefit from the staff developing strong links with other professionals within the local community. For example, they welcome and implement advice appropriately from other professionals. This includes those who help support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery works well with other providers who care for the children. They share information about the children's learning and the manager regularly sends the children's individual learning plans to other settings that they attend. This effective partnership working enhances the care, learning and development for each child and supports their improving outcomes.

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
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 action. 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	EY241373
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	910154
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	109
Name of provider	The Old School House Nursery (Lewes) Ltd
Date of previous inspection	17/03/2011
Telephone number	01273 480492

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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