

The Avenues Montessori

406 Northdown Road, MARGATE, Kent, CT9 3PG

Inspection date	26/04/2013
Previous inspection date	05/01/2011

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
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

- A well-established key person system results in children feeling secure and having good bonds with adults.
- Parents are well informed about all aspects of the nursery, and included in their children's progress and learning.
- All children make good progress from their starting points and become confident and independent learners, due to adults' skilful teaching techniques.
- Strong leadership and management monitor all aspects of the nursery and drive improvement and the competent staff team provide a high standard of care.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The nursery environment and the range of resources and activities do not fully reflect a diverse society.
- In the outside area, there are no large resources to support children's physical skills which children can work together to move around and create their own structures, supporting their ability to actively solve problems.

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 inspector observed activities in the two play rooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of the nursery.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the nursery and the Operations Manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documentation, including children's assessment records and planning documentation, self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the nursery's own parent survey.

Inspector

Cilla Mullane

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Avenues Montessori Nursery opened in 2007. It re-registered in 2010 due to operational changes. It is one of seven nurseries operated by Townsend Montessori Nurseries Limited. The nursery operates from two large rooms in a detached building in Margate, Kent. Children have access to a secure outside play area. The nursery serves families from the local community and surrounding area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 144 children aged from three months to five years on roll. The nursery gets funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 21 members of staff in addition to the company's owner, operations manager and lead manager. This includes the manager, a Montessori teacher, two apprentices, a lunchtime assistant and a maintenance man. The two overall managers are qualified to level 6, and the daily manager to level 3. All other staff (apart from the lunchtime assistant and maintenance man) are qualified to level 3 or 4, or level 2 and working towards level 3, and the two apprentices are working towards level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the educational programme for understanding the world by celebrating and valuing cultural, personal, religious and community events and experiences and by improving the range of resources, displays and activities which help children learn about a diverse society

- improve the educational programme for physical development by providing large resources which children can move around use cooperatively to create their own structures.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress due to adults' good understanding of how children learn, and their skilled teaching techniques. The educational programmes extend across all areas of learning, Adults caring for babies allow them to explore freely, and are on hand to keep them safe and support their play. Toddlers become independent learners, and are confident to keep trying at a chosen task. For example, when mastering a baby walker they confidently get back up following a fall, showing a good attitude to learning. Older children are enthusiastic and keen to draw and write, happily discussing their pictures and making shapes to represent their names. Their self-help skills and independence are especially good. At meal times they carefully set the tables with glasses, and count how many more are needed. They competently pour their water from a glass jug, serve their own food, and scrape their plates.

Staff plan activities and provide resources having carefully observed and assessed children's individual needs and interests. As a result, children engage well and enjoy learning experiences tailored to their needs. The staff accurately monitor children's progress at age two to three years, so that parents are informed, and other people who support children have relevant information.

Children do not have many opportunities to explore their personal cultures and those of others. In addition there are not many images of diversity around the nursery, or within the resources. This limits children's understanding and respect for people who are different to them, and their knowledge of the world.

Staff include parents and keep them informed in a wide variety of ways. Therefore they have a good knowledge of how the nursery operates, and about their children's progress. For example, at 'parents' socials' they have the opportunity to go through their children's progress folders with their key person. This helps them understand more about how their child is developing across the areas of learning, and contribute additional information about their child. Furthermore parents know what staff are currently working on with their children, which enables them to extend children's learning at home. As a result, continuity of care is good.

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

A very strong key person system results in children feeling very safe, and developing strong bonds with adults. Parents demonstrate that they appreciate the key person system. They know that it supports their children's feelings of belonging and security, but is also a point of contact for them to discuss any concerns. Children develop strong bonds with their key persons, approaching them confidently for cuddles and reassurance, holding up their arms to be picked up. Key persons take children 'up' to the next room for settling in periods and to meet their new key person. Consequently children settle well and

quickly, and feel a sense of belonging. The youngest children begin to learn about safe behaviour when the staff remind them not to put cars on the slide.

Pre-school children understand the rules regarding kindness and good behaviour because these are frequently discussed. During an outdoor group session, an adult asks children to remember the rules, and reinforces what these actually mean. For example, children know they must have 'kind hands', and staff also ask them to think about what kind hands do. Children comment that if they hit one another it will make them cry. Therefore children learn the effect of their behaviour on the feelings of others.

The atmosphere is busy and calm, with children engrossed in play, exploring, making choices and leading their own learning. They work quietly on their own, or staff support them sensitively. Adults model politeness and respect well, saying 'thank you' and you're welcome' and children respond well to their high expectations.

Staff sensitively prepare children for their move from the younger children's room to the pre-school. They get to know staff and their new surroundings during supported visits, and therefore feel secure and familiar with the room when they move full time. They are also well prepared for the transition to school. Adults read books about starting school. They encourage children to do activities with other children who will be going to the same school, so children have friendship groups when they move on. Children are very independent and active learners who are confident and take charge of their own learning. These skills are invaluable in preparing children for school.

Resources are all of good quality, and freely accessible to the children, who choose what interests them, and use them in different ways. Most resources are made of wood or natural resources, rather than plastic, and children benefit from playing with different textures, feels and smells. Good quality Montessori equipment also encourages problem solving and aptitude at life skills such as pouring and fastening. However, the outdoor area has few resources which children can use to build and create structures using their imaginations, such as crates or tyres to make, for example, buildings or vehicles.

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

The nursery is safe and secure. Robust risk assessment procedures are in place and implemented consistently to ensure that children are safe and cannot leave the premises unsupervised. For example, a member of staff at the reception desk monitors times of arrival and collection to make sure that the main door remains secure. In addition, they can see all areas of the nursery on the closed circuit television screen, which contributes to their safeguarding measures. Recruitment procedures are also robust, and include vetting staff to make sure they are suitable to work with children.

Staff have a good knowledge of how to protect children, and access to a wealth of guidance about safeguarding, which is on display in the office. Child protection training is kept up to date, to help ensure staff are aware of changes in procedures. Staff follow

good practice regarding the recording of accidents. This helps to ensure that parents are fully aware of any minor accidents their children may have had during the day. Staff also follow good safeguarding practices regarding the use of mobile telephones when working. When parents do not inform staff about children's absence, staff contact them to make sure all is well, further protecting children.

The staff carefully monitor the educational programmes, and thorough systems are in place to check that individual children are all making steady progress from their starting points. Records clearly show if children need support, and this enables staff to act promptly to address any gaps in learning. As a result, staff liaise well with other agencies and work in partnership with parents to meet each child's needs. The nursery is developing a system to check that groups of children, such as boys or those who speak English as an additional language are making consistent progress.

A high priority is given to staff development, and good training opportunities are offered to improve staff's skills and improve the quality of the provision. For example, recent training includes 'Every Child a Talker' which is being implemented to improve children's communication and language skills, and help parents support children's speech development. Management take an active role in the day-to-day running of the nursery and they know where staff's skills lie. They offer relevant and interesting training to build on these as part of their ongoing performance management of the staff. Management and staff work together cohesively to improve the nursery, activities, resources and practice. For example, managers carry out monthly room observations and assess the effectiveness of the environment and activities. Staff are then given a budget, and organise the improvements. For example, staff have recently developed the range of resources to improve children's understanding of nature. Staff bought magnifying glasses so children can hunt for bugs outside and learn about living things. As a result, the resources improve, and staff feel valued and empowered. There are well-targeted plans for future improvement, including plans to develop the outside areas to better reflect indoor activities. This has a positive impact on the development of children who learn better outdoors.

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
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	EY413016
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	909963
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	77
Number of children on roll	144
Name of provider	Townsend Montessori Nurseries Ltd
Date of previous inspection	05/01/2011
Telephone number	01843221155

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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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