

Whitstable Montessori Nursery School

Unit 4, Chaucer Business Park, Wraik Hill, WHITSTABLE, Kent, CT5 3FE

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Inspection date | 23/07/2013 |
| Previous inspection date | 07/01/2013 |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | 3 |
| | Previous inspection: | 2 |
| 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 | | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision | | 3 |

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- All children, including those with special educational needs and / or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points.
- A strong key person system results in children, especially babies, and their parents, feeling supported and having good relationships with staff.
- The learning environment indoors is attractive, clean and calm, with an emphasis on natural resources that are easily available. Children can therefore explore with all their senses and initiate their own play.

It is not yet good because

- The provider has needed to make improvements to the medication procedure to improve children's safety.
- The outdoor area is not exciting or challenging for children of all ages, which limits opportunities for them to explore in this environment.
- The organisation of lunchtime does not meet the needs of the youngest children and there are reduced opportunities for younger children to rest in cosy areas to promote their well-being.

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 six play rooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of the nursery school in a pre-school room.
- The inspector held meetings with the managers of the provision.
- The inspector viewed a range of records and other documentation, including children's progress records and evidence of staff suitability and qualifications.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector
Cilla Mullane

Full Report

Information about the setting

Whitstable Montessori Nursery School is one of seven nurseries run by Townsend Montessori Nurseries. It opened in 2010 and is situated on the outskirts of Whitstable, in Kent. It operates from several rooms on the ground and first floor within a self-contained converted office block. Access to the first floor is via a flight of stairs. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm, closing for bank holidays and a week at Christmas.

There are currently 169 children in the early years age range on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 31 members of staff who work with the children; of these, 23 hold appropriate childcare qualifications to at least level 2. Three members of staff are currently working towards a childcare qualification. The nursery operates in line with the Montessori educational philosophy and is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the outdoor area so that activities are stimulating and challenging for children of all ages.

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

- provide toddlers with cosy, quiet places to be calm, feel secure and relaxed
- improve the organisation of babies' lunch time, so that they are not frustrated by waiting for their food.

Inspection judgements

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

Children of all ages make good progress in all areas of learning from their individual starting points. Planning of activities takes into account children's interests and what they need to learn next, as well as activities to introduce or consolidate new skills.

Staff use a good variety of teaching techniques effectively throughout the setting. In the pre-school, adults enthuse children and engage them in imaginary play. Children pretend to go on a bear hunt, and excitedly join in the repeated phrases, enjoying acting out this familiar story. The pre-school children's enthusiasm for learning and joining in help them to gain valuable skills for their future learning.

Babies' key persons closely support them and plan activities to meet their individual needs. Staff chatter to them and respond to their babbling, having 'conversations'. Babies are beginning to show characteristics of effective learning, becoming confident to separate from staff to explore their room. Staff encourage children to learn through all their senses, for example, as they use babies' feet to operate a rattle. Staff make frequent eye contact with babies, who laugh when rewarded for their interactions by being tickled.

Pre-school children enjoy opportunities to help prepare their snacks. Staff introduce mathematical language, and children comment that they have 'too much' or 'not enough' cheese. Activities such as this develop children's social skills, as they work together to cut apples, one child holding the apple, and the other cutting it. Staff skilfully adjust the activity to children's individual abilities, for example, providing real knives for children who are adept at cutting, and safety knives for the others. Children are confident to have a go, and have good self-esteem due to adults' encouragement and praise.

When children are assessed as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, staff act promptly to get support and advice from appropriate people. They continue speech therapy programmes with children, and work in partnership with parents and specialist teachers. As a result, these children make good progress from their individual starting points.

Transitions to other rooms are handled well and sensitively by the setting. Children are gently introduced to the staff and environment in the next room as they move up through the nursery school. Parents are invited in to meet new key persons. Therefore, children settle happily. As children move on to school, staff share children's progress records with the schools, so they can meet children's needs by knowing their starting points.

During their time at the nursery school, children acquire the skills they need for their future learning. Parents confirm that their children are well prepared for school, they are independent and know numbers and shapes. The Montessori approach encourages children to become competent with self-help and life skills. In the Montessori classroom, which is led by a Montessori teacher, children practice skills such as fastening buttons and zips, and basic mathematics.

Parents feel very well supported, and their views respected, by approachable staff. They especially appreciate the effective key person system, and feel included in and able to contribute to their children's learning. They know what staff are currently working on with their child, and are able to contribute their knowledge of what their child can do at home and about their child's interests. This enables staff to meet their individual needs well.

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

Most aspects of staff practice promote children's general wellbeing to a good extent. However improved systems have needed to be put in place to promote children's well-being due to a recent incident.

The key person system works well, especially and most importantly in the baby room. Here babies interact closely with their key person, forming strong bonds, and key persons attend to children's care routines, helping these children to feel safe. Parents know who their key person is, and value the close relationship with themselves and their child. There are opportunities for babies to meet with their older siblings which delight both, and increases feelings of security. The youngest babies enjoy a sense of security in their enclosed calm black and white area. However, as toddlers move to other rooms, there are no cosy covered areas to be alone, feel secure and relax.

Children learn how to look after themselves. They know that if the fire alarm sounds they must 'go outside and line up at the gate'. They are adept at using tools safely. For example, adults demonstrate safe use of knives as they enable children to make their own sandwiches for snacks.

Children are confidently able to discuss the rules, and explain the reasons why they are important. For example, they say that there is 'no running' in the pre-school, because 'you might fall over and bump your head on the floor'. They know they should 'be kind to our friends'. Staff manage children's behaviour appropriately. Their positive attitude, use of praise, encouragement and age appropriate explanations, result in children behaving according to expectations, sharing and cooperating. For example, when cutting up fruit for a snack, they willingly wait for their turn to use the chopping board. Staff model respectful behaviour well, and children benefit from the example of a male member of staff in a caring role.

In general, care routines and the organisation of the days meet children's needs. However, babies are frustrated as they wait at the table for their lunch to arrive. Some enjoy singing as they wait, but for others the wait is upsetting.

Children understand about germs, and the need to wash their hands. They understand how to brush their teeth and the importance of this by practising on a large model. Children of all ages benefit from playing in the fresh air, whatever the weather. Sometimes adults miss opportunities to engage children in discussion about healthy food and what it does to their bodies. For example, when making sandwiches and cutting up fruit, adults do not talk about the importance of eating lots of fruit and vegetables.

Indoors, the nursery school is well-resourced, older children use craft resources to design freely, and babies can explore their room safely using all their senses. An emphasis on wooden furniture and natural resources results in a calm atmosphere, where children can learn through all their senses. Continuous access to the outdoor area is not possible, and staff therefore make an effort to take out a variety of resources, including toys requested by the children. In general there is something for all ages to enjoy, and staff organise

interesting activities, but overall the area is not exciting enough for children to explore.

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

There has been a recent incident where staff did not follow the correct procedure for administering medication, and therefore children were not safeguarded at this time. The provider informed Ofsted of the event as required. This has led to a review of the medication procedure and improved monitoring of this aspect of the welfare requirements. Other strategies to keep children safe are effective, and procedures implemented thoroughly. For example, adults responsible for monitoring sleeping babies demonstrate a good knowledge of safe sleeping practice. The premises are secure, and the entrance carefully monitored, so only known people are able to come in. Staff only hand children over to known adults, and are confident to challenge people they do not know. Staffing ratios are met, staff are deployed appropriately and children are carefully supervised as they walk round the building to and from the garden. Staff carry out head counts during this process. Recruitment systems are robust, and help ensure that staff are suitable. Staff have regular training about child protection, and demonstrate a good knowledge of procedures to safeguard children.

In other respects, leaders and managers of the nursery school successfully ensure that development and improvements are ongoing. The staff's professional development is supported well, and there is a system to monitor the educational programme.

Managers are adept at evaluating practice, assessing what works well, and planning future improvement. For example, when observing children preparing snacks, it is recognised that staff do not make the most of chances to talk about healthy lifestyles. Good ideas for building on this activity include inviting a dentist in to help children learn about dental hygiene. The views of both parents and staff are taken into account when evaluating the quality of the provision. For example, parents have asked for football coaching, and this is being arranged. A challenging action plan is in place, and currently staff are looking towards rearranging the area of the nursery school used by children under two years of age. The changes are to better meet the needs of these children, and staff are included constructively in this process.

There is a well qualified staff group, who are professional and committed to providing a good service. Their professional development is well supported, both by in house training, and other training to meet their needs. The manager supervises them and monitors their performance well and together they identify training needs to build on skills and address areas where they are less competent.

There are sound systems in place to monitor the progress of both individual children, and groups of children. This enables staff and managers to address any gaps in children's learning. Furthermore, the manager supervises staff effectively. This helps to ensure that their interaction with children is of consistently good quality, and that they maintain

children's progress records accurately.

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 | EY412806 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 923277 |
| Type of provision | Full-time provision |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 8 |
| Total number of places | 109 |
| Number of children on roll | 169 |
| Name of provider | Townsend Montessori Nurseries Ltd |
| Date of previous inspection | 07/01/2013 |
| Telephone number | 01227274444 |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

