

Kings Castle Montessori Nursery School

Kings Castle Montessori, 31 Saxonbury Road, BOURNEMOUTH, BH6 5NB

Inspection date	14/05/2013
Previous inspection date	16/11/2012

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		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

- In early morning sessions the number of staff caring for younger children is inadequate as required ratios are not met. Children wander aimlessly as staff act in a supervisory role rather than engaging with individual children.
- In early morning sessions babies are at risk in the event of an emergency because there are insufficient staff caring for them and some staff do not know the names of all children present or the emergency evacuation procedure.
- The individual needs of younger children are not always met due to poor staff deployment.
- Arrangements for transporting babies upstairs is poorly organised and does not ensure their safety.
- Children receive little input from staff during outdoor physical play with staff predominantly acting in a supervisory role and providing few opportunities for children to experience new challenges through planned, purposeful play.

It has the following strengths

- Older children learn to concentrate and work independently due to the patience and dedication of experienced Montessori teachers.

- Children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported by caring staff who have relevant skills.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector observed activities and the quality of teaching both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector sampled records of observations, assessments and planning for individual children.
- The inspector talked to staff and held meetings with the manager and the deputy manager.
- The inspector had conversations with children.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability.

Inspector

Heather Allen

Full Report

Information about the setting

Kings Castle Montessori Nursery School is a privately owned nursery which initially opened in 1997. It re-registered following the amalgamation of the nursery and baby unit. The rooms for babies and younger children are located in a separate part of the building to the rooms for older children. It operates in a residential area of Tuckton, near Bournemouth. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It follows the Montessori philosophy of education. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. There are currently 205 children aged from three months to under eight years on roll. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free nursery education for children aged two, three and four years. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery employs 26 members of staff. There are 19 staff with level 3 qualifications or above and four staff with level 2 qualifications. There are five staff who are working towards an early years qualification or a further qualification.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide more opportunities for children to increase their abilities in physical development by implementing planned, purposeful play through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities
- organise staffing arrangements so that ratio requirements are met at all times with regard to the total number of staff available to work directly with children
- deploy staff effectively to ensure the needs of all children are met and ensure their safety, including the safe transferral of young children from one area of the building to another
- take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency and ensure that staff know the names of all children present and are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures

Inspection judgements

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

Young children and babies are at risk and their individual needs not met during the early morning sessions because there are insufficient staff caring for them. Staff who are redeployed from other areas of the nursery are unfamiliar with the younger children and do not know all their names. Children wander round aimlessly because staff are not able to give them individual attention or provide them with learning and care that is tailored to meet individual needs. Arrangements for taking babies upstairs are unsafe, including staff carrying two babies upstairs at a time. Other children wander near the bottom of the stairs and watch because there are insufficient staff to engage them in more purposeful activities.

Staff ratios are maintained once staff on later shifts have arrived but staff caring for babies are not always effectively deployed. During the afternoon session babies participate in a bread making session. They are encouraged to stir and smell the dough while staff use words such as 'mixing' and 'sticky' to help develop their communication and language skills. They make marks with their fingers in the flour on the table. However, when the activity is finished one member of staff is left caring for seven babies while the cooking area is brushed and cleaned and the bread put in the oven. Babies are distressed and crying as they wait until the cleaning is finished before staff prepare their milk.

All children benefit from a good liaison between the nursery and parents. There are flexible and supportive settling-in procedures. Parents are asked to give comprehensive information about their children before they start at the nursery and on a monthly basis once they start. Parents receive regular feedback about their child's learning and development both through discussions with their child's key person and from parent feedback days. Parents are particularly appreciative of the care and support given to children with special needs and comment on the kindness of the staff. They describe staff as 'Going above and beyond' especially because some staff have learnt how to use specialist equipment.

Children who are learning English as an additional language are well supported. Staff are patient and thoughtful and spend time helping children to match colours and using descriptive words repetitively to increase children's understanding and communication. Teachers with specialist language skills provide additional support.

Older children learn to concentrate and gain skills through regular one-to-one teaching. Staff patiently present activities to children and teach them how to use a piece of equipment. Once a child has learnt how to use equipment they are encouraged to work independently without interruption from other children. Children treat equipment with respect. They spend long periods completing an activity, such as fitting different shaped objects into the right sized hole, before carefully storing the equipment back on a shelf.

Staff spend time observing children during activities. They evaluate areas where a child is struggling and might need more support or where a child easily completes an activity.

These observations are recorded so that another member of staff can easily see how to help children make further progress.

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

The individual needs of younger children are not always met. There are insufficient resources and activities organised at the beginning of the day resulting in some younger children wandering around on their own without purpose. Due to staff shortages, staff act primarily in a supervisory capacity rather than engaging with children on an individual basis. Bored children open drawers containing additional resources. However staff do not encourage children to get these out and quickly shut the drawers when children lose interest and move away. Children do not appear to have close relationships with staff or to be emotionally secure. During the main part of the day younger children have opportunities for more individual attention when they are involved in small group activities such as bread making. However, staff are poorly deployed after the activity. Babies are left hungry and crying. One member of staff tries to comfort them while other staff ignore their cries and continue to tidy up and change nappies.

Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Toddlers dress up in waterproofs to explore the wet sand in the sand pit when it is raining. Children grow herbs outdoors and learn about the different smells, such as mint. Staff carefully supervise children when they play on the outdoor play equipment but are not seen to get actively involved in children's play or organise any adult-led activities. Children tend to initiate their own play. They learn different physical skills as they experiment by themselves to use outdoor resources, such as stepping in and out of the boat and tyres, walking the balancing beam and climbing on the castle. However, there is a lack of opportunity for children to participate in more challenging adult-led activities and develop their physical skills further. Outdoor play is a lonely experience for some children as they wander round without actively engaging with other children or staff.

Older children have a good relationship with each other and with staff. They excitedly bring in presents for their teacher which they have made themselves on holiday. They are polite and behave well. Staff sort out minor issues sensitively and quickly. They discuss with children why giggling might disturb others who are trying to concentrate. Older children are seen to be well occupied and absorbed in their work and play. Staff encourage communication and language skills by taking time to have conversations with older children that make them think. They use simple words with younger child to describe what they are doing.

Children are encouraged to gain skills in independence. Meal and snack times are a social occasion. Older children pour their own drinks, use knives and forks proficiently, put waste into a bin and wash their own plates. They learn how to use scissors and cut the tops off items of pre-packed food.

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

Due to planning restrictions, children are only able to access the outdoor play area at certain times of the day which leads to many of the children using the outdoor area at the same time. As a result of a child having an accident when using the outdoor play equipment, risk assessments have been reviewed and staff diligently supervise children to ensure they play safely. Specific spots have been identified for staff to stand on so they can safely support and supervise children, such as next to the slide and fireman's pole. However, because staff primarily act in a supervisory role, children are left to organise their own play. The equipment lacks challenge for children who use it on a regular basis and there is a lack of focus on enhancing children's physical skills through adult-led activities.

On the day of inspection, staff ratios were not met in the rooms for younger children due to staff sickness. Although some staff were redeployed to help care for younger children, effective contingency measures were not in place to ensure there were sufficient staff to meet children's needs.

Children are not safeguarded in the event of an emergency. Individual rooms have a list of the children who are due to attend but the record of attendance of children actually present is kept in the main office. Staff who are redeployed and provide cover for staff absence say they do not know the names of all children present and would need to do a head count to ensure all children are evacuated in an emergency. Newer staff have opportunities to work in different rooms to gain experience. However, when they move rooms they are not always familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and say they would need to use their own initiative if an emergency arose.

Parents say they are well informed and familiar with the policies and procedures of the nursery. They spend time talking to staff and have opportunities for regular meetings to discuss their children. Suitability checks are carried out on all new staff and on-going suitability is also checked. Staff are dedicated and passionate. They are supported in their personal development through regular supervision and appraisals and by attending internal and external training, including Montessori conferences. Many of the staff are experienced and qualified Montessori teachers.

Regular management and staff meetings are held where practice is evaluated. The manager keeps informed about what is happening in the nursery by regular visits to the different areas and by talking to staff, children and parents. Early years advisors also visit the nursery. Staff have recently been reviewing the Montessori Early Years Foundation Stage documents for children so that all aspects of learning are fully covered in the curriculum. As a result of self-evaluation, one of the pre-school rooms has been extended and some new materials added. The different Montessori roles of observer, presenter and conductor have also been re-assessed to ensure that all teachers present materials in the same way. This ensures that the methods for teaching older children are consistent even when their key person is not present.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY380634
Local authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	914931
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	68
Number of children on roll	205
Name of provider	Saxonbury Road Ltd
Date of previous inspection	16/11/2012
Telephone number	01202 422235

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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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